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The Nation

Vol. CXLI, No. 3659

Founded 1865

Wednesday, August 21, 1935

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By A. B. Magil

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THE LAST-MINUTE reversal of the Senate Finance Committee, eliminating the proposed higher surtax rates on incomes of less than \$1,000,000 and striking out the amendment reducing personal income-tax exemptions, destroys all hope that the pending tax bill might be converted into a genuine social measure. Reduction of the exemption, though it was criticized as a tax on the poor, would have had the effect of increasing taxation on the moderately well-to-do, who heretofore have failed to bear their share of the burden. Since even in 1929 three families out of five in the United States had incomes below \$2,000, it is evident that the tax would have fallen on a favored few. If the amendment had been retained, a family of five with an earned income of \$3,500 would still have paid no tax, while a family of six with an income of \$5,000 would have paid only \$36. Even more commendable was the proposal to start the surtax on a net income of \$3,000 instead of \$4,000, thus steepening the slope of the graduated tax. The rejection of the principle of the inheritance tax in favor of an increased levy on estates, on the other hand, is definitely reactionary and implies a solicitude for future heirs of great

wealth which is wholly without social justification. In view of the fundamental conflict in principle between the proposals drawn up by the two houses, it is especially regrettable that Congress is determined to rush the bill through by August 24, the date now set for adjournment. Given time and strong Administration leadership, a sound system of taxation might have been evolved in place of the half-way measure recently adopted by the House of Representatives.

AT FIRST SIGHT the report of the national income for 1934 just issued by the Department of Commerce makes encouraging reading. National income paid out—as contrasted with national income produced—showed an increase of \$5,000,000 over 1933 and \$1,500,000 over 1932, a rise of 11 per cent in twelve months. The percentage of income paid for labor, including salaries, was slightly higher than in 1929, and considerably above the early years of the depression. But a somewhat closer examination is in order lest the Democratic Party be tempted to use these figures as proof of the success of the New Deal. It will be found, for example, that aggregate wages and salaries in all industries increased from \$29,545,000,000 in 1932 to \$30,815,000,000, in 1935—an advance of 4 per cent. During this same period, however, the cost of living in the United States, according to the most conservative estimate, rose 3 per cent, leaving a net gain to the working class of 1 per cent over the last days of the Hoover Administration. If allowance were made for the 1.6 per cent growth in population in the interval, the relative position of labor would be found to be slightly worse than in 1932, and the resulting figure would be almost identical with *The Nation* Index of Labor Welfare published elsewhere in this issue. If we compare the 1934 figures with those of 1929, the picture is even more distressing. Labor income has dropped 37 per cent as against a 20 per cent decline in the cost of living, while the population has increased 4 per cent. We suggest that both Democrats and Republicans look elsewhere for their campaign arguments.

IN HIS memorable speech of acceptance as Chancellor of Germany Hitler promised that unemployment in the Reich would be liquidated in four years. "Give me four years," he shouted, "and crucify me if by that time I have not lifted the nation out of its present deplorable condition." That was in 1933. January, 1937, is drawing uncomfortably close and Goebbels's propaganda factory is working overtime to prove that Hitler's words were not all wind. Thus the Berlin correspondent of the *New York Times* cabled the other day that the number of registered unemployed in the Reich has been decreased from 6,013,000 in January, 1933, to 1,754,000 on July 31, 1935. The *Times* correspondent reminds his readers of Hitler's four-year promise and quotes a statement recently made by Dr. Ley, chief of the German Labor Front, that the *Führer's* prediction will be fulfilled by the end of 1935. What are the facts? In 1934 the Nazi authorities struck 900,000 workers from the unemployed registers as "unemployable,"

and classified them as dole receivers instead. The *Times* correspondent himself reports that another half-million is to be similarly lopped off the lists this year. Approximately 900,000 women were ousted from their jobs as the result of Nazi propaganda against women in industry; their places were taken by former unemployed. Of these women, almost 400,000 married with the help of the dowry paid by the state. About 600,000 men entered the Reichswehr and the labor camps, while some 300,000 city workers were sent to the country by the famous Arbeitsdienst, where they are exploited unmercifully for the bounteous sum of fifty pfennigs a day. The expansion of the war and munitions industries, together with seasonal changes, accounts for the rest. That is the real story of reconstruction under Hitler, told without benefit of censor or Propaganda Ministry.

THE EXPECTED RESISTANCE to Premier Laval's deflationary program almost developed into an open revolutionary movement. Strikers in the naval arsenals at Brest, Toulon, Cherbourg, and Lorient paraded under red flags singing the "Internationale." Severe fighting between the police and strikers at Brest and Toulon led to the death of at least eight persons and the wounding of several hundred. A walkout on the French Line which tied up service for more than forty-eight hours was only settled after officials of the line had agreed to provide more work in order to maintain existing wages. While peace was eventually restored in all the disturbed centers by dint of minor concessions and compromises, the widespread resentment against the government's economy measures has not been appeased. Since the cost of living in Paris is only 3 per cent less than in 1926 after four years of severe deflation, no one seriously expects Laval to be successful in reducing it 10 per cent by means of a governmental edict. The rioting is ascribed to the influence of "professional agitators, hoodlums, and Communists," but the spontaneity and severity of the protest should serve to warn Laval of the fate of the man who sought to save Germany by "emergency decrees."

IN DENMARK fascism has recently waged and lost its first important battle. Under cover of an appeal for help sent by distressed farmers to the King, the Agrarian Association, known as the L. S., a group composed mainly of landowners and junkers, made an impudent attempt to force Christian X into an unconstitutional action against the Stauning government. To this end a "farmers' march" on Copenhagen was arranged for July 29. The leaders of the L. S. arrived in more than a thousand private cars, and 30,000 farmers and small tenants were brought to Copenhagen by ship and train to provide an impressive background at Amalienborg Palace for the King's reception of a deputation from the association. The political purpose of the "march," underlying its vaguely formulated economic grievances, was to drive a wedge between the sovereign and the government. King Christian's answer to the L. S. delegates was of impressive curttness: "I do not wish to refuse this deputation admittance, though the address it carries contains statements and claims on which I feel unable to express myself. As a constitutional king, I can only consider the people's lawfully elected representatives, so that I must ask the deputation to apply to the Prime Minister. . . ." Herr Stauning was present at the reception although the

deputation had tried to keep him away. The royal speech was in fact Herr Stauning's own crushing retort to the agitators. That this was understood and resented was indicated by the clamorous demonstration against him which broke loose when Knud Bach, leader of the L. S. movement, came out to announce the results of the reception through the microphone. A feature of the "march" was the conspicuous presence of a Nazi wing, headed by Count Knuth, who is the right arm of Dr. Clausen, founder and chief of the Danish National Socialist Party.

THE COMMITTEE on academic freedom of the American Civil Liberties Union presents a disturbing report on the spread of loyalty-oath laws for teachers. In 1931 only six states had such laws, but since then fourteen more have passed them. The drive for these bills is increasing in vigor largely as a result of the agitation of the Hearst papers and the "allegedly patriotic societies," such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the American Legion, the Elks, and the chambers of commerce. The bills are part of a program to hamper the expression of all non-conformist opinion in the schools, the colleges, and the press. The "patriotic" virus has entered even the federal courts, as the Krumbein case, commented upon in *The Nation* last week, amply shows.

IN SHARP AND HAPPY CONTRAST to this new development of "Americanism" is the anti-race-discrimination bill recently signed by Governor Earle of Pennsylvania. The law states specifically that there shall be no discrimination "because of race, creed, or color" in these places: inns, taverns, roadhouses, hotels, restaurants, buffets, saloons, bar-rooms, ice-cream parlors, confectionaries, soda fountains, drugstores, dispensaries, clinics, hospitals, bath-houses, theaters, motion-picture houses, airdromes, roof gardens, music halls, race courses, skating rinks, amusement and recreation parks, fairs, bowling alleys, gymnasiums, shooting galleries, billiard and pool parlors, public libraries, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, high schools, academies, colleges and universities, garages, and all public conveyances. The bill is plainly in line with the best traditions of our history, but it is reported that the hotel men of Pennsylvania plan to attack its constitutionality.

THE *CHURCHMAN*, liberal Episcopal weekly, was a pioneer in the movement against indecent films. Its fight has been waged with vigor and intelligence—not prudery. It has steadily opposed censorship and directed its attack at the economic roots of the movie industry in the office of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors and their czar, Will Hays. In the course of an article on the tyranny exercised by the "motion-picture trust" over exhibitors, it was stated that "Will H. Hays, Adolph Zukor, Gabriel Hess, Charles C. Pettijohn, and numbers of other individuals and film producers have been indicted in the Province of Ontario for conspiring to prevent competition in that portion of Canada." The statement, taken from *Harrison's Reports*, was inaccurate and the *Churchman* immediately published an apology and retraction. But Mr. Hess, general attorney of Mr. Hays's office, sued, and the suit has been pressed through one court after another until in June of this year the Supreme Court in New York

awarded a verdict of \$10,000 punitive damages and \$200 compensatory damages against the *Churchman* and the Reverend Guy Emery Shipler, its editor. The refusal of the plaintiff to accept the *Churchman's* retraction reveals an unrelenting enmity on the part of the Hays office that must be gratifying to Mr. Shipler. But it is an expensive form of tribute. Unless the decision is reversed, the *Churchman* must raise \$10,200—a large sum for a liberal weekly. For a time it was doubtful whether the *Churchman* could survive the verdict, but the religious press of the country rallied to the defense and has opened its columns to appeals for funds. Opinion may vary as to the responsibility of the movies for juvenile delinquency, but no such doubt should cloud anyone's belief that a journal of unquestioned integrity and courage should be saved from extinction at the hands of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors.

APPARENTLY UNAWARE of the beneficent effects of Japanese "law and order," Manchurian bandits have indulged in a series of outbreaks unprecedented for daring and savagery. The attacks are particularly significant not only as evidence of Japan's utter inability to subjugate the major portion of the countryside but as an indication of the growing severity of the region's economic crisis. In this both nature and the Japanese appear to have taken a hand. An official report of the South Manchuria Railway estimates that crops will be 40 per cent below normal this season and indicates a serious drop in the supply of livestock. Add to this increased taxes and the economic ravages of a government-sponsored drug trade, and it is scarcely surprising that thousands are being forced into brigandage. While there is doubtless an element of truth in the Japanese charge that Chinese patriotic organizations have furnished arms and ammunition to certain bands of outlaws, police records show a substantial part of the contraband to have been furnished by Japanese smugglers. The bright side of the picture is that Japan is unlikely to attack the Soviet Union as long as Manchuria remains in turmoil.

THE SECOND REPORT of Mayor LaGuardia's committee investigating the Harlem riot of March 19 deals almost entirely with the police situation. It was made by a subcommittee headed by Arthur Garfield Hays. The committee found that the outburst was not a race riot, that it was "spontaneous and unpremeditated," and that it "was the result of a highly emotional situation among the colored people of Harlem due in large part to the nervous strain of years of unemployment and insecurity." Further, the charge that the riot was instigated by Communists was found to be untrue, "though they sought to profit by it." The committee is especially severe in its comment upon the Harlem police, saying, "It is a grave state of affairs when the inhabitants of a large section of the city have come to look upon the men in police uniforms as lawless oppressors who stop at no brutality or at the taking of human life." The report lists several instances of police brutality in Harlem, stressing the case of Thomas Aiken, who was accidentally pulled out of a line waiting for relief food and so severely beaten by the police that one of his eyes had to be removed. It continues: "It is indefensibly bad police work when two armed police officers cannot arrest an unarmed man in broad daylight in a public building without beating him up and gouging out an eye." The committee recommends the prompt

prosecution of the offenders in all cases of police brutality and also the formation of a committee made up of Harlem residents of both races to whom instances of such behavior might be reported.

THE CRADLE OF LIBERTY is lurching badly. Clifford Odets's play, "Waiting for Lefty," which has come to be a device for testing the degree of free speech allowed in American communities, has been denied the privileges of the Town Hall in Provincetown, Massachusetts; the selectmen of the same town had previously denied the use of the hall for an anti-war meeting because they suspected that the Communists were promoting the affair. So far 700 names have been signed to a petition protesting against these suppressions and one of the summer residents has suggested that if the selectmen are consistent they should tear down the tablet in the Town Hall commemorating the Mayflower compact which was drawn up in Provincetown harbor in 1620 by forty-one men who had fled the Old World to seek freedom in the New. Needless to say, the Board of Trade indorsed the action of the selectmen, who allowed as how Cape Cod is too conservative for "reds and agitators." (They also threatened to punish the 700 petitioners by publishing their names in the newspapers, which would indicate that Cape Cod is cut off from the realities of American life in more ways than one.) Like many another set of local authorities, the selectmen of Provincetown are determined to protect the cradle of American liberty from reds and agitators even if they have to throw out cradle, baby, and all. In the face of this tendency we are glad to hear that the Town Counsel of Plymouth, Massachusetts, has ruled that the Rock is the property of all American citizens. The issue is somewhat clouded, however, by the fact that the ruling was handed down in behalf of the owner of a tourist home who contended that he had a right to solicit customers in the vicinity of the famous relic. We shall feel more reassured when we hear of a production of "Waiting for Lefty" at Plymouth Rock.

WE AGREE in general with Lawrence Cramer, the new governor of the Virgin Islands, that you can't solve the problems of the world by taking your clothes off. But while we do not believe that you can solve all of the problems by taking all of your clothes off all of the time, we do believe that you can solve some of the problems by taking some of your clothes off some of the time. And we are glad that Magistrate Hulan Capshaw of Jefferson Market Court in New York City agrees with us. We refer to the case of David Alper, of the Bronx, who attempted to solve the problem of heat in New York by taking off his coat and got arrested for entering the Fashion Center Building in his shirtsleeves. This was not the charge brought against him; it never is. Mr. Alper was arrested for disorderly conduct, but we do not have to consult the American Civil Liberties Union or the I. L. D. to know that he was really arrested because of his opinions. He dared to disagree with the owners of the Fashion Center Building, who think men ought to wear coats. Magistrate Capshaw upheld the freedom of dress in a decision that will bear quotation—it could also stand a little punctuation and editing. "The custom in hot weather in New York City," he said, "has been so prevalent of men going around without coats that we have come to its acceptance as a common and proper method of dress."

The Tax Bill and the Tories

NO measure proposed by the Roosevelt Administration has been subjected to a more bitter attack from the right than the tax bill. The opening gun was fired on the day the Senate took up consideration of the bill by Dr. Benjamin M. Anderson, economist of the Chase National Bank, known as a diehard proponent of laissez faire. Two days later, representatives of the United States Chamber of Commerce echoed Dr. Anderson's criticisms before the Senate Finance Committee. Largely as a result of this criticism the inheritance tax provided in the House bill has been replaced in the Senate committee by an increased estate levy which does not fall so heavily on the ultra-wealthy, and the point at which the increased surtaxes on incomes are to begin has been raised from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000.

While a large part of the opposition to the Administration's tax program may be dismissed as a frantic effort on the part of a few wealthy individuals to escape the burden of taxation, certain of the objections presented by the orthodox economists are at least worthy of serious consideration. Boiled down to essentials the conservative's case against the House bill rests on the following four points: (1) that the principle of a graduated corporation tax based on the size of the company attacks the very foundations of industrial efficiency; (2) that the collection of the inheritance taxes will necessitate the forced liquidation of many great estates with detrimental effect on important business enterprises; (3) that increased taxation will strike a blow at initiative and enterprise, and eliminate an important source of business capital; and (4) that the proposed rates are so high as to be confiscatory.

On the first point the criticisms of economists and business men are essentially sound. There is no justification for a tax on bigness as such, and the attempt to impose such a levy is uncomfortably reminiscent of Nazi economics. Protection against profiteering and monopoly, in so far as it can be achieved through taxation, can best be provided by radically stepping up the excess-profits tax. Abandonment of this particular section of the tax bill would involve no violation of the principles of social taxation and would make very little difference as far as the amount of revenue is concerned.

In picturing the dangers of the forced liquidation of great estates, the tory interests played up the theoretical effect of the House bill on the Ford properties. Senator Vandenberg declared, for example, that the proposed inheritance tax, on top of existing estate duties, would take approximately \$27,000,000 of Henry Ford's \$300,000,000 interest in the Ford Motor Company. To pay this levy it would be necessary, he contends, either to turn the company over to the government (heaven forbid!) or to sell shares on the market, in which case the ownership and control would fall into the hands of Wall Street. The sudden forced liquidation of this company, it is further argued, not only would cause a huge loss to the estate but would endanger the efficient operation of one of America's largest industries. In response to this charge Robert H. Jackson, counsel of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, pointed out that Edsel Ford, the probable recipient of the estate, already owns

41½ per cent of the stock of the Ford Motor Company, and that this share—worth approximately \$250,000,000—would not be touched by the proposed legislation. Thus at most Edsel Ford would part with approximately one-half of the tremendous fortune that is his by virtue of being the son of one of the pioneers of the automobile industry; and his control over the policies of the company would probably not be endangered. Family ownership of a great industrial enterprise, moreover, is admittedly an anachronism. Henry Ford will probably go down in history as the last great entrepreneur of the type glorified by the classical economists. Even in the case of the Standard Oil Company, where family interests are unusually large, the Rockefeller holdings are greatly outweighed by those of others. The Senate bill seems to be designed primarily to aid the impoverished Fords.

Just how much the forced liquidation of a large estate would depress the real-estate and security markets depends, of course, on the general economic outlook at the time of liquidation. But under no circumstances would there be destruction of real wealth. Factories, bridges, and machinery would remain, though their ownership might change. At worst such a loss would have the effect of an additional tax falling upon those who are fully able to bear it. Tales of widows and orphans being left to face the world penniless because of the combined effect of heavy taxes and depreciated values are told with a deliberate intent to deceive. In the House bill no taxes at all are levied on the first \$50,000, while the combined federal estate tax, state impost, and proposed inheritance levy on the first \$200,000 is less than \$37,500. Even inheritances of this size are, we believe, against the best interests of society.

In declaring that increased taxation will tend to check economic progress in the United States, conservative economists have assumed that the savings of wealthy men are automatically transformed into capital goods and thus increase the productive power of the country. Recent investigations made by the Brookings Institution have revealed, however, that under modern conditions there is very little connection between savings and investment, and that the tendency of the wealthy to oversave is responsible for the present maladjustment in our economic structure. If this conclusion be accurate, recovery and economic stability are dependent on the breaking up of great fortunes and the redistribution of wealth in such a way as to assure the maintenance of a steady flow of purchasing power to the great masses of the population. The Administration's program is at best but a feeble step in this direction.

Regarding the cry of confiscation little need be said. All taxation is in a sense confiscatory. The only choice before us, as Mr. Jackson pointed out, is which economic group shall pay the cost of the depression. With sales taxes in force in a large number of states and with the so-called nuisance taxes growing, we can be assured that the masses will continue to bear the largest share of the burden of taxation. The immediate issue is whether the wealthy groups can be compelled against their will to assume at least a part of this burden.

Boycott the Olympics!

WE can imagine no more effective method of expressing popular disapproval of Nazi *Schrecklichkeit* than a widespread boycott of the Olympic games at Berlin. Most boycotts have a way of showering their effects upon the just and unjust alike. But a boycott of the Olympics would hurt only the Nazis and their loyal followers; it would injure no Jew or Catholic or "uncoordinated" Protestant. And it would constitute a reproof which would echo throughout the world and even penetrate the sound-proofed barricade of the Nazi censorship.

It would be too much to expect the International Olympic Committee spontaneously to cancel the arrangements to hold the games in Berlin. Indeed, the various national committees will doubtless refuse, as Avery Brundage, chairman of the American committee, has already done, to withdraw their teams unless they are forced to by overwhelming pressure. But sentiment for such a move is growing as the true situation in the Third Reich becomes more widely understood. Already the *Commonweal*, leading Catholic weekly, has called upon all Catholic athletes to refuse to compete in the games if they are held at Berlin. The *Christian Century*, a liberal Protestant organ, has demanded that the games be held in some other country. Great mass-meetings in Boston and New York have unanimously adopted resolutions urging the Amateur Athletic Union to refuse to certify its athletes for participation in the Olympics. Various prominent individuals, such as Jeremiah T. Mahoney, head of the A. A. U. and member of the American Olympic Committee, have taken the same attitude. But so far Mr. Brundage stands pat, choosing to accept without scrutiny the German position that in the selection of its team neither race nor creed nor color has had any weight. Hans von Tschammer und Osten, Nazi sport dictator, is quoted in the New York *Times* of August 12 as saying: "Every athlete in Germany has an opportunity for training. Those who had the best records were selected for our team. Jewish students have a special training camp at Ettlingen where they enjoy all privileges." That is the official claim. The facts that lie behind it are different, and are detailed in a long dispatch to the *Times* by Frederick T. Birchall, printed in the column next to the statement quoted above. The German team in the Olympiad, says Mr. Birchall, will be a "political" team, entirely under Nazi control and probably wholly Nazi in complexion. Theoretically, anyone, even a Jew, might be a member. In practice this is wholly unlikely unless a Jew is included as a matter of expediency. Mr. Birchall cites the case of Greta Bergmann, one of the few first-rank Jewish athletes remaining in Germany. Miss Bergmann was excluded from a national contest held in preparation for the Olympics "not because she was Jewish but because she was not a member of the coordinated German Light Athletic Association," in charge of the meet. "Nor could she be a member because of her ancestry." As for the special Jewish training camp, a joker lurks in the bushes there, too. It was a segregated camp opened to certain limited groups of Jewish athletes—war veterans and some students—for a training period of three weeks, which period "matched the ratio borne by the number of Jews in Ger-

many to the total German population." The further psychological factors hampering the development of Jewish athletes are too obvious to detail.

Recent repressive acts have weighed almost as heavily on the Catholics and on certain Protestant groups as on the Jews—but with an important difference. The Catholic and Protestant youth societies have either been disbanded or forced to give up their sport activities. But their members may join the Nazi sport organizations if they choose. In Bavaria, it is said, most of the young Catholic athletes have become thus "coordinated." But where the feeling runs high many thousands of boys have refused to yield and are consequently shut out of all opportunity for athletic training.

The simple truth is that, despite official protestations, sport is no more free in Germany than are speech and political activity. Interested groups of Americans should bend every effort to draw our teams out of the games. A boycott of the Olympics would touch the Nazi government in two very tender spots—its prestige and its pocket-book.

The WPA Strike

AMERICAN labor is being sold down the river again by the gentleman in the White House, who is smiling but firm as he makes it clear that skilled workers can take half their usual wage rate or go hungry. Meanwhile his head overseer, General Johnson, has told the workers, with all the gusto of a man-eating shark, that it won't hurt much, that they are misguided children, that the Communists are trying to seduce the American Federation of Labor, that he himself is one of the greatest champions of labor's rights, that their families will starve if they don't take a cut in wage rates, and that it will have no effect on wages in general. He also intimated that he had been sent to New York because the Administration anticipated the present strike situation.

There is no doubt, of course, that the government can break any strike of relief workers that is likely to develop. The Administration could be defeated only by a resistance so widespread and solid as to make it politically advisable for it to yield. The fact that the new attack on living standards is centered on the wage rates of the aristocracy of labor, the building-trades workers, means that the American Federation of Labor bureaucracy is hit literally where it lives. For that reason it might be expected to put up the fight of its life in an attempt not only to preserve the rates of its skilled members but also establish its leadership over labor as a whole, both organized and unorganized, both employed and unemployed. But William Green from his deck chair in Atlantic City promptly disowned the WPA strike. "These conditions," he said, "rest entirely in the hands of the various international unions. Each of the internationals must handle their troubles themselves. Each has full authority to deal with all matters of wages and hours where their members are affected. The executive council of the federation has no authority to take any action." He later issued a statement in which he predicted the WPA strike would spread, deplored such strikes, and recommended that to avoid them all WPA building projects be transferred to the PWA, which maintains the prevailing

wage. "We told Congress," said Mr. Green when the strike began, "just what would happen if they failed to insert the clause calling for prevailing wage scales. . . . All this trouble has taken place just as we predicted it would." He might have added that the Administration proceeded with its "security" wage, safe in the knowledge that it need expect no "trouble" from the A. F. of L. leadership. On the contrary it can always count on support from such deck-chair labor leaders as Major George L. Berry of the pressmen's union, who told reporters that he regarded General Johnson's position as sound and added, "I have confidence in the building-trades workers' ability to realize the importance of maintaining at this time the greatest possible degree of tranquility."

In New York George Meany, president of the State Federation of Labor, who has so far been the principal and most aggressive spokesman of the strikers, maintains that the strike will tie up all WPA work in the city because building-trades workers "are just not going to work for a wage scale that would break down standards we have worked fifty years to build up." Yet both he and Joseph P. Ryan, president of the Central Trades and Labor Council but much better known for his sabotage of the San Francisco strike, showed little enthusiasm for cooperation with groups who wish to join with the A. F. of L. unions in combating the "security" wage. Mr. Ryan, like General Johnson, is more afraid of the Communist influence, alleged to be strong in those groups, than of a new wage scale. Fortunately the strike committee headed by Thomas Murray is less fearful and has arrived at a working agreement with some though not all of these groups.

As we write, it is impossible to judge the extent of the strike and the direction it will take. But one thing has become clear. Mr. Roosevelt, whether he wishes it or not, has emerged as the leader in the attack on living standards—the discredited device of capitalism for getting out of a depression—and he is prepared to enforce his "security" wage even if he has to fill the place of the strikers, whom he naturally prefers to call "men who returned to their homes," with strike-breakers recruited from the relief rolls.

A Warning to Roosevelt

NO one should be deluded by the delirious Republican cheers over the Rhode Island Congressional election or by the New York *Herald Tribune's* announcement that it is "the beginning of the end." As the analysis of the election we print on another page shows, various motives entered into the result and those who were supposed to be battling for the New Deal showed only a dubious loyalty to it—if that. The Republicans who are now so jubilant had better recall the fact that they have neither a candidate nor an alternative platform; that shrieking that the Constitution is endangered and that Mr. Roosevelt has broken his campaign pledges—what President has not?—will not by itself defeat him.

Yet we would not deny that there was a profound warning to the President in the Rhode Island vote. The loss of a seat by 13,000 which was captured by 21,000 only nine months ago cannot be attributed wholly to local causes.

Nor can it be denied that in the East at least there is a marked drift away from the President, especially among those who have come to believe that his policies are endangering the nation's welfare instead of aiding it. The growing labor unrest cannot but affect unfavorably the party in power. Labor is sore, and with reason. It was promised a revolutionary change in its status by the NRA, only to have the benefits denied in practice. The tide of Mr. Roosevelt's popularity has receded amazingly since his overwhelming success at the polls nine months ago, quite sufficiently to give an excuse for the often-repeated saying that "the President seems to have a rare talent for snatching defeat out of victory."

How much farther it will recede in the coming fifteen months before the election depends in largest degree upon the President himself. He should personally take to heart the warning conveyed by the Rhode Island vote. It may well be, as he assured the press, that he did not know of the election until he read the results in the newspapers. But that should not keep him from pondering long and deeply over the figures, or from asking others than his immediate, and necessarily sycophantic, entourage just how he and his Administration stand before the public. Especially should he inquire among those liberals who, however great their misgivings, endeavor to give full support to the really progressive steps taken by the New Dealers.

Were we asked to offer advice, we should beg him to eschew politics. No man ever had less excuse for playing the political game than he after his unparalleled triumph of last November. That was an unprecedented vote of confidence. Yet he went on in the same old way. The Postmaster General continued to function as national chairman of the Democratic Party and as state chairman in New York. Patronage was still withheld or awarded with a view to political pressure—we have just seen the incredible appointment as Minister to Norway of a man stamped by an American court as a faithless trustee of other people's money. We should point out to him that his whole Administration is rightly criticized and seriously endangered because of his refusal to state his real objective, to chart his course not only so that he who runs may read but so that his own subordinates may know that his direction will not be changed to suit every shifting political wind.

To put it in a few words—the details would fill pages—the President is failing because of his habitual policy of compromise. He is failing because he is true neither to the best that is in himself nor to his own program. He need not be dismayed by charges that he has gone socialist and communist, but he may well be alarmed by the frequent administrative disorganization and inefficiency in Washington, which, again, are largely to be explained by his own failure to steer a straight course. As for Congress, the President need not berate that body or charge it too strongly with disregard of his wishes. No Congress ever had more asked of it, or gave more, unless it were his first. But any Congress might well be expected to revolt when the President puts out casual feelers, like his recent tax proposals, and then suddenly makes up his mind and demands their approval overnight. These, as well as the absence of economic recovery, are some of the reasons which are leading so many voters to say: "Well, the President has had his chance and has not saved us after all."

Issues and Men

The Railroads Begin to Progress

IT is good news that the leading railroads have not been able to agree on a united opposition to the proposed reduction in Eastern passenger fares and that these changes may be forced through by the Interstate Commerce Commission in advance of any hearings on the proposal, which is in fact a plan suggested by the Baltimore and Ohio. The New York Central and the Pennsylvania have also seen the handwriting on the wall and are ready for fare reductions, but feel that they should not be as great as those suggested by Irving L. Koch, an examiner for the commission, whose report to his superiors started the ball rolling. Mr. Koch urges a three-cent rate for Pullman travel and a two-cent rate for coach transportation, with a return-trip rate, suggested by the Baltimore and Ohio of 2.5 cents a mile for Pullman passengers and 1.8 cents for coach passengers. At last! It has been perfectly obvious for a long time that there was only one way in which the railroads could hope to win back some of the business lost to the private motor and the bus, namely, by reducing fares and radically improving the service. With the aid of the federal government they have been able to build new, fast, streamlined trains with remarkable results. More than that, faced with this competition among trains, they have found they could greatly speed up old-fashioned trains to compete with the new fliers. After seventy years these representatives of American enterprise and of the efficiency of private capitalistic management have even discovered that there are ways of improving the historic day-coach, which they have continued to build in one pattern as if ingenuity in this field were utterly exhausted.

That the outlook for them is gloomy enough admits of no doubt. There have been more railroad bankruptcies during this crisis than in any other in our history. Ever since last fall earnings have begun to go down again. The reports of Class 1 railroads for June show that they suffered a net loss of \$3,400,000 as against a net gain of \$5,869,000 in June, 1934. Their net loss for the first half of this year will probably be no less than \$60,000,000 as against a \$24,853,000 loss a year ago. The only encouraging thing is that two years ago the net loss was \$101,204,000. Obviously the railroads continue to be a great stumbling-block to national recovery. Employment is just one-half of what it was in 1920 and the reduction in employees since 1929 has been no less than 600,000 men, leaving the total number employed at only 1,000,000. (Joseph B. Eastman, the Coordinator of Railroads, has just reported, moreover, that 150,000 railroad workers are working for a basic pay of less than 35 cents an hour while some 17,000 men, whose cases were studied, are receiving only 20 cents an hour. Mr. Eastman also reports that a substantial number of employees are working twelve hours a day seven days a week—an intolerable state of affairs. Something radical must be done; yet the railroads have hesitated to move although their chief competitors, the auto and truck manufacturers, have steadily sought to meet the depression by producing better cars at much lower prices. The railway men have usually been

concerned only to take off as many trains and abandon as many branch lines as possible, to lay off as many employees as they could and then to make the welkin ring with their complaints of government competition with their business and the refusal of Congress to regulate their competitors on land and water. Here, it is true, they have a substantial grievance, for Congress has not yet passed the bill, urged both by the President and Mr. Eastman, for the regulation of trucks, buses, and river and coastwise steamships.

(While it must be perfectly plain to the unbiased that eventually government ownership of all the railroads is absolutely inevitable) Senator Wheeler has introduced an excellent bill in the Senate to bring it about—the results of the new methods are well worth the most careful study. Wherever trains have been speeded up, the financial outcome has been most striking. Thus, the Alton reports an increase of 25 per cent in passenger travel as a result of the 5½ hour trains between Chicago and St. Louis with no loss in night travel. Its competitors, the Wabash, the Chicago and Eastern Illinois, and the Illinois Central, all report increased traffic, (the Wabash and the Eastern Illinois each winning no less than 60 per cent increase in June over May when the fast schedules were not yet in force.) For the first twenty-five days in June the new streamlined Zephyr trains on the Burlington, which make four daily trips between St. Paul and Minneapolis and Chicago, carried between 310 and 325 passengers a day out of a total capacity of 352, and business between these cities as a whole showed an increase of 64 per cent in north-bound and 56 per cent in south-bound traffic. The Hiawatha of the Milwaukee road, which competes with the Zephyrs between Chicago and the Twin Cities, is an old-fashioned train, but it has had a remarkable success. Instead of using five cars it has to run seven and in June carried an average of 552 passengers on its round trip. One day it carried 500 passengers on its north-bound run and 408 on its south-bound trip. Business in the second half of the month was 23 per cent greater than in the first half. The Hiawatha is reported to run between 90 and 100 miles an hour for a good part of the trip. It is interesting to note that the roadbeds have everywhere proved adequate to the new speeds, but the swaying of the trains still needs the attention of the engineers.

There remains the question of railroad reorganization. Here everything is still in flux, and the Senate on May 20 last passed a resolution calling for a thorough investigation of the status of the railroads. That we shall get a great deal of additional knowledge and light upon the question of reorganization and regrouping of the roads admits of no doubt. But the main outlines of the problem are as clear as is the eventual solution.

Isabel Garrison Villard

A Cartoon by LOW



ON THE THRONE OF JUSTICE.

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The Elks Save America

By A. B. MAGIL

WHEN Michael F. Shannon, Grand Exalted Ruler of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, turned over the reins of office to his successor, Justice James T. Hallinan, of the New York State Supreme Court, at the organization's annual Grand Lodge convention held July 15-18 in Columbus, Ohio, he brought to a close an administration that marked the emergence of the Elks from a mere fraternal order into an active factor in the political life of the country.

It was on July 17, 1934, in his acceptance speech at the last convention in Kansas City, that Mr. Shannon launched his "Pro-America" campaign. "Scattered throughout every section of the land," he told his brother Elks, "are groups who regard themselves as members of combat forces, prepared and anxious for the ultimate of violence, a violence which they hope to bring about by mob excitation. To the harangue of the gutter Communists has been added the voices of teachers in schools and high schools and colleges—a small percentage of the whole, but great in the aggregate and constituting the most vicious influence in American life today."

Mr. Shannon cited startling facts concerning the ramifications of the red network and, as a shiver ran through his audience, announced: "We are now meeting in Communist District Number 10."

"The time has arrived in America," thundered the Grand Exalted Ruler, "when the issue is, 'Shall it be the Stars and Stripes of the United States of America, or shall it be the red flag of the Communist International?' This is no longer the time to merely talk our devotion to the flag and the institutions for which it stands—it is time to act our love of country. Will you, my brothers, join with me in a dedication of this order and its every lodge to a year of militant patriotism?"

Just what he meant by "act our love of country" Mr. Shannon indicated a few minutes later: "The police departments and sheriffs' offices of the country are the first line of physical defense. When they do their duty, let them have the encouragement that is their due. Go farther, and give them every assistance that they can use and want within the law."

To Mr. Shannon all this was no academic question. At the very moment that he spoke the reds in his home state of California had captured San Francisco through the general strike, organized, he knew, on instructions from Moscow, and were planning to set up Soviets all over California and perhaps at points east. Mr. Shannon met the challenge and issued what the *Elks' Magazine* of August, 1934, described as "a clarion call to arms against the red rabble."

The chief of the Elks lost no time in translating words into deeds. On August 11 he held a conference at the Hotel Traymore, Atlantic City, with district deputies of surrounding states, where the details of the "Pro-America" campaign were worked out. Other conferences were held. With talks before lodges where the "Pro-America" zeal

showed signs of flagging, with sponsorship of anti-labor gag bills, with appearances before the Dickstein Committee on Un-American Activities, and with participation in the immortal galaxy of fifty-six outstanding Tories of 1935 who signed Mr. Hearst's new "Declaration of Independence," Michael F. Shannon cut a wide swath.

The "Pro-America" campaign, backed by the Hearst press and conducted in cooperation with the leaders of the American Legion, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and similar groups, bore fruit in the form of a variety of bills introduced in state legislatures and in Congress designed to suppress "subversive activities and propaganda," to outlaw the Communist Party, and to deport "undesirable aliens"—all the patriotic little acorns ready to begin growing into sturdy fascist oakhood.

Mr. Shannon, son of a police officer, is an ambitious Los Angeles lawyer-politician, and has been an active Elk for twenty-five years. He has served as deputy city attorney and was deputy district attorney of Los Angeles under the reactionary John Fredericks. Fredericks is the man who, as special prosecutor, sent the McNamara brothers to jail in 1910 in one of America's most famous labor trials. Shannon has represented oil interests in the Kettleman Hills oil field in California, and recently appeared for the executor of the Willard Van Brunt estate, one of the largest estates probated in that section for many months.

It would be naive to suppose that the "Pro-America" campaign was merely the result of Shannon's personal prejudices. On the contrary, there is reason to assume that his selection as national head of the Elks was dictated by his special qualifications as a red-baiter. On December 18 Shannon appeared before the Dickstein committee. He went through the whole litany of crimes of the reds and urged the use of "intelligent and lawful federal force" to forestall a Communist revolution. He concluded by presenting his eight-point "Pro-America" program. It calls for strengthening of the espionage activities of the Department of Justice, outlawing of organizations and imprisonment of individuals that "advocate" overthrow of the government by force and violence, suppression of publications alleged to advocate such doctrine, deportation of alien reds and revocation of citizenship of naturalized aliens, and more stringent immigration laws to prevent the entry of radicals.

During the next few months the Elks anti-red drive was speeded up. It centered around a campaign for signatures to petitions in support of the eight-point program. Some of the individual lodges—though by no means all—showed exemplary zeal. Thus the May, 1935, issue of the *Elks' Magazine* reports:

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Lodge, No. 191, was recently commended by the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce for the stand it has taken regarding the circulation of Grand Exalted Ruler Shannon's petition for signatures looking to the arrest of any citizen or alien advocating

the overthrow of the government. The directors were pleased that the eight-point legislative program of the Elks, as contained in the communication, was along the lines of a pamphlet sent out by the trade body to its members.

In other words, the Steel Trust approves.

In January Mr. and Mrs. John E. Waters, back from two years in the U. S. S. R., began a six months' lecture tour, speaking on Soviet Russia for the Elks. The Waters's had somehow been overlooked by William Randolph Hearst, but they had seen fully as many terrible things as Thomas Walker, Harry Lang, Andrew Smith, and Fred Beal.

On February 15 and 16 a two-day conference on the "Pro-America" campaign was held at the Hotel Commodore, New York. Supreme Court Justice James T. Hallinan, whose candidacy for the office of Grand Exalted Ruler had already been announced, was guest of honor. Speakers included Supreme Court Justice Ferdinand Pecora, who was then Exalted Ruler of New York Lodge Number 1; Lieutenant-Governor William Bray, also an Elk; Daniel E. Kerr, president of the New York State Elks; and Shannon.

Bills in the spirit of the eight-point program were sponsored in state after state. In California no less than eight of them, backed by the Elks, were introduced in the legislature. There the Masons were inspired to start a similar drive. In Michigan Frank G. Mitzel, vice-president of the state Elks, appeared at an open hearing to urge enactment of one of the most drastic of the gag measures, the Dunckel bill. Among those whom he had for company was Harry A. Jung, head of a labor-spy and anti-Semitic outfit known as the American Vigilant Intelligence Federation. In a number of states Mr. Shannon and his fellow-crusaders for fascism succeeded in enacting gag bills into law.

The high point of the "Pro-America" campaign was the formal presentation to Congress on March 26 of petitions, bearing, it is claimed, hundreds of thousands of signatures, urging the enactment of Shannon's eight-point program. This patriotic descendant of once-undesirable aliens led a band of crusaders to Washington for the presentation ceremonies, which took place on the Capitol steps in the presence of the 302 Senators and Representatives who are members or former members of the Elks. The Grand Exalted Ruler made a speech in which he invoked the names of Jefferson and Lincoln, both of whom would be thrown into jail under his eight-point program. Vice-President Garner and Speaker Byrns—both Elks—replied for the Senate and House respectively.

When Congress opened that day, Representative R. A. Green, a member of Lodge Number 990, Gainesville, Florida, of the B.P.O.E., citing the stirring ceremonies that had been concluded only a few minutes before, introduced his alien-deportation bill, couched in the spirit of the "Pro-America" campaign. The day after the presentation of the anti-red petitions, Representative Charles Kramer, who belongs to Shannon's lodge, Los Angeles Number 99 (of which Senator McAdoo is also a member), read the Grand Exalted Ruler's speech into the *Congressional Record*. Kramer is the author of two of the most sweeping anti-labor gag bills that came out of the activities of the Dickstein committee, of which he was an energetic member. These measures would not only outlaw the Communist Party and

its press, but as Congressman McCormack admitted at the secret hearing on the bills, could be used to break strikes.

Elks in high office are thus doing their part in the "Pro-America" campaign. Others, who may not be participating directly, must be aware of this campaign and its implications. Surely President Roosevelt, who is a member of Lodge Number 275, of Poughkeepsie, knows what Brother Shannon is driving at. If he doesn't, he might ask Representative Hamilton Fish, who belongs to the same lodge.

It would be ridiculous, of course, to suggest that basic policies of government are determined by membership in a fraternal order; yet situations arise that may be colored thereby. I don't know how often Governor Clyde Tingley of New Mexico and Attorney General Cummings attend the meetings of the Elks' lodges to which they belong, but their refusal to act against the kidnappers of Robert Minor and David Levinson was entirely in accord with the "Pro-America" platform. And when Secretary of the Navy Swanson was beset by demands that he discipline Rear Admiral Yates Stirling, Jr., for writing an article in the Hearst press urging a Nazi-led war against the Soviet Union, did he perhaps turn for strength and comfort to the eight-point gospel of Brother Shannon, even though Mr. Swanson has allowed his membership in Lodge Number 227, Danville, Virginia, to lapse?

The most active Elk in the present administration is the patronage chief and conjurer of surpluses, Postmaster General Farley. Farley is a Past Exalted Ruler of Lodge Number 877, Haverstraw, New York, and a former president of the New York State Elks' Association. He can generally be seen at Elk conventions.

No less than thirty-four governors of states and territories are Elks, while a thirty-fifth is a former Elk. Governor Dave Sholtz of Florida served in 1933-34 as Grand Esteemed Leading Knight, an office second only to that of Grand Exalted Ruler. The new Grand Esteemed Leading Knight is Mayor Bernard F. Dickmann of St. Louis, while the new Grand Exalted Ruler; Justice Hallinan, is reported to have "pledged himself to continue the policies and principles of militant Americanism advocated by his predecessor" (*New York Times*, July 17). The Senate has 54 Elks and 9 former members, while in the House the figures are 197 and 42 respectively. Huey Long is a member and so is Bilbo of Mississippi. Congressman John W. McCormack, chairman of the Committee on Un-American Activities, and Congressman Dickstein, its moving spirit, are both former Elks.

The New York State membership includes Governor Lehman, Lieutenant-Governor William Bray, Al Smith, Mayor LaGuardia, former Governor Whitman, Ogden Mills, United States Judge Murray Hulbert, who is a past Grand Exalted Ruler, nearly all the General Sessions judges and the justices of the Supreme Court, President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University, Dr. Frederick Robinson, president of City College, Borough President Samuel Levy, Alfred H. Schoellkopf, chairman of the State Temporary Emergency Relief Administration and president of the Niagara Hudson Power Corporation, and Henry M. Brundage, retired vice-president of the Consolidated Gas Company.

One wonders how all these people feel about the "Pro-America" campaign. One wonders, too, how the more than 500,000 members of the Elks feel about it in view of the fact that they had no part either in selecting Michael F. Shannon as Grand Exalted Ruler or in launching the anti-red drive. Three leading officials of the Elks told me the response from the members had been "hearty" and "splendid." But a fourth confided that there had been very little interest in the business, that the entire campaign, as he put it, had been "handed down from the top."

The drive toward fascism grows apace. Already the Tydings-McCormack civil-disobedience bill, which the Elks supported, has been sneaked through the Senate by means of the "unanimous consent" clause and has now been favorably reported by the House Military Affairs Committee. The powerful lobby of Hearstian red-baiters and fascists of every stripe are pressing for the enactment of the Kramer bills. Whether they know it or not, the national leaders of the Elks, in the name of the defense of democracy, have taken the road that leads to fascism.

The Crisis of the Middle Class

II. The Middle Class Under Fascism

By LEWIS COREY

IN the desperate effort to save itself, declining capitalism rejects its own values and achievements: revolts against abundance and development of the productive forces, against democracy and progress. Most sinister is the revolt against the future, as capitalism can survive only if it prevents emergence of the new social order represented by the economic forms of collectivism. The reaction becomes complete in fascist repression of *all* progressive forces. Already, in Italy and Germany, fascism has erected economic and cultural decline and decay into a system. It makes a creed of the most reactionary ideals, prejudices, and passions; it inflames nationalism and imperialism and drives more ruthlessly toward new and ghastlier wars. Fascism is the new barbarism that threatens to overwhelm the world. The threat calls on our generation to act, for fascist barbarism would consume our blood and bones, hopes and ideals, in the onswep of its destructive fury.

All classes become desperate and are set in motion by aggravation of the economic crisis created by the decline of capitalism. The middle class calls upon its old ideals and forms of action: democracy, more reforms, and more state intervention in economic activity. But as these measures fail to produce results, the middle class realizes that new forms of action are necessary. What shall they be? If the new action is determined by the acceptance of capitalism and rejection of socialism, the middle class must mobilize against labor, whose struggle for a new social order becomes more aggressive under impact of the crisis. By that decision the middle class throws itself into the consuming fires of fascism.

The decision means that the middle class resolves to solve its crisis, as in the past, within the relations of capitalist property and against labor. But it forgets that this crisis is different from former crises, and that economically the fate of large groups in the middle class is now inseparably interlocked with that of labor.*

Former crises of the middle class were an aspect of the *upswing* of capitalism, and were "eased" by the upward movement of economic activity. Independent small enterprisers were increasingly limited, but it was still possible to

become one, while the rapidly multiplying salaried employees and professional workers were assured employment and some hope of higher incomes. But the new, and final, crisis of the middle class is an aspect of the *decline* of capitalism, of a crisis of the system, and it is made hopeless by the downward movement of economic activity. Both business opportunity and the middle class must shrink as economic expansion shrinks, and the social forces of production and consumption are strangled to save capitalist profit from the threat of abundance. Independent small enterprise is not only limited more severely, it must move toward final destruction. Masses of lower-salaried employees and professional workers are imprisoned in the degradation and misery of permanent unemployment and depressed standards of living. They may move against labor, but capitalism throws them into the depths with the wage workers.

Whose interests are expressed in mobilizing the middle class against labor and resisting the transformation of collectivism into socialism? Only the interests of surviving small enterprisers and the higher managerial and supervisory employees who are identified with monopoly capitalism. But while their interests agree on saving capitalism, they clash otherwise. For small enterprise must limit monopoly to survive, and monopoly must more intensely exploit small enterprise as economic activity moves downward. Moreover, the propertyless masses of lower-salaried employees and professional workers are ignored, for their interests are wholly with collectivism and its socialist transformation as the only means of solving the "new" middle-class crisis of employment by releasing the productive forces. Under these conditions of inner class disunity, only an artificial unity is possible and an evasive program which is all things to all groups. A split personality, the middle class has no independent class interests. Hence the "unity" of negation: against labor, against democracy, against socialism and communism. Hence the "unity" of reactionary ideals: for the authoritarian state, for nationalism, for war.

The elements of this reaction are not altogether new. As small enterprisers realized that the struggle against monopoly was doomed, they began to hope for mere survival and "security" within the set-up of monopoly capitalism. This meant an increasing abandonment of the democratic

*This subject is discussed more fully in the third article of the series, *The Middle Class Under Socialism*, to appear next week.

ideals identified with freedom of enterprise and resort to the coercive measures of state capitalism. Another reaction against democracy appeared among the higher managerial and supervisory employees, who are entangled in the authoritarian, hierarchical relations of monopoly capitalism. It was symptomatic that American pre-war progressivism, especially in the person of Theodore Roosevelt, considered that middle-class needs meant acceptance of "regulated" monopoly, a state capitalism dependent on bureaucracy and caste, and an aggressive nationalism and imperialism. The reaction becomes worse as the middle class struggles for "security" in a declining capitalism: all progressive forces must be crushed for capitalism to survive. Out of the middle class leaps the monster of fascism: the class that formerly waged revolutionary war on authoritarianism now provides the mass support for a new authoritarianism determined to crush the ideals of liberty, equality, and democracy.

The "independent" struggle of the middle class becomes fascism when its reaction merges with the reaction of the big bourgeoisie. Monopoly capitalism and imperialism represent a reaction against democracy and progress and an assimilation of authoritarian ideas: the urge toward an all-inclusive economic and political dictatorship. This reaction is invigorated by the decline of capitalism. Economic breakdown, falling profits, the burden of social services, and the growing revolt against capitalism drive the big bourgeoisie to action: it must more completely merge industry and government, use state power more vigorously to "reconcile" class-economic contradictions and mercilessly crush all opposition. But this cannot be done arbitrarily or by the old methods, for the discontent of the people is real and dangerous. *Fascism, using radical phrases and middle-class support, provides the ideological justification, the "popular" sanction, and the mass support to suppress forcibly all progressive forces and prevent the transformation of collectivism into socialism.* To call anything else fascism is to misunderstand its nature and bedevil the struggle against it.

From the beginning the more far-seeing big capitalists supported fascist movements: Mussolini was financed by the Union of Industrialists, Hitler by Krupps and the bankers. But fascism is not a conspiracy of big capital, which seizes on forces in the middle class already moving toward fascism. An "independent" revolt of the middle class, determined to save property and crush labor and socialism, must become reactionary and accept the relations of the dominant monopoly capitalism. Small enterprisers cannot hope to destroy the great corporate combinations and this would be resisted by managerial and supervisory employees, members of the middle class who are identified with monopoly capitalism and who would be the driving force of an American fascism. The propertyless masses of lower-salaried employees and professional workers are rallied by promises of "security" and "privileges," and by inflaming their passions and prejudices, as a minor caste in the new fascist set-up. Again, as in the past, the middle class becomes the support of dominant capitalist interests.

Fascism comes into power with the consent of the capitalist state, which surrenders, as it did to Mussolini and Hitler, to avert a civil war that might aid the revolutionary struggle. Now fascism combines with all the openly reactionary forces. It proceeds to destroy communism, socialism, and trade unionism: Mussolini destroyed them one after an-

other, Hitler all together in one annihilating swoop. But liberalism must also be crushed and all middle-class organizations. Most dramatic was the suppression by the Nazis, shortly after coming to power, of the militant League of the Middle Class, composed mainly of small shopkeepers. When the fascist party becomes the state it purges itself of all "radical" elements, those who took seriously the old anti-capitalist demagogy and might now incite the middle class to defend its interests against the new regime. Fascism deprives the middle class of all independence: it must, like the workers, submit silently to the new authoritarianism of the totalitarian state, for freedom of action becomes a monopoly of the state and its big-capitalist masters.

The crises of the middle class—of property and of employment—are aggravated by fascism. It neither solves the crisis of capitalism nor prevents the inner class changes which increasingly convert the middle class into propertyless masses of salaried dependents. Nothing is changed except for the worse. Fascism is not a new social order; imprisoned within the forces of declining capitalism, fascism is the old capitalist order become putrid, organizing economic disintegration, mass misery, and reaction into a system.

What is new in fascism is the technique of creating "popular" sanctions for the ruthless suppression of all opposition and all progressive forces. Economically, fascism offers nothing new: its policy is merely the old state capitalism, only more of it. But state capitalism neither prevented depression nor revived prosperity in non-fascist nations; its planning is nothing more than piecemeal aid to capitalist enterprise to prevent complete breakdown and save profit. While fascism bluffs about "controlled capitalism" and the "corporate state," these offer no control over fundamental economic forces because they represent the repressive merger of monopoly capitalism and the state, and accept the vested interests of capitalist property; in fact, more economic disorganization is created. In fascist Italy the levels of pre-depression prosperity were lower than in other nations and the depression much more severe. Fascism in Germany did not end the depression but prepared an economic catastrophe. The crisis of capitalism is the crisis of an abundance that now threatens capitalist profit. Fascism strangles the forces of production and consumption; but as they are strangled, economic activity must move downward. Using collectivist measures to prevent the transformation of collectivism into socialism, fascism is a negative, destructive expression of the onward thrust of the new social order. Neither the old capitalist individualism nor the new socialist collectivism, that "system" must imprison the productive forces and bring about economic disaster and increasing misery.

And as the misery of the people becomes worse, fascism answers by making misery itself an ideal. Hitler talks of "heroic poverty." Mussolini asserts: "I know you are not looking for a comfortable life. Therefore I announce to you the approach of a hard period." They are reverting to medieval glorification of the poor.

The heaviest burdens of the new misery are thrust upon the wage workers. But the middle class, too, is engulfed in the economic disaster: it may try, but it cannot separate itself from the misery of labor. It must shrink in numbers as economic expansion contracts and monopoly capital secures a larger share of smaller markets. In Italy and Germany, under fascism, the middle class has decreased

probably from 25 to 35 per cent as a proportion of all persons gainfully occupied. And its burdens have multiplied.* Fascism profits only the small minority in the upper middle class, which becomes a dominant class within monopoly capitalism.

The middle class rallies to fascism to defend the "natural right" to property, and is then increasingly deprived of the right. Concentration of property ownership under the fascist regimes of Italy and Germany has moved upward by from 30 to 40 per cent. Big property mercilessly expropriates the smaller. Fascism means a multiplication of the propertyless.

Independent small enterprisers rally to fascism for "security," but it makes them still more insecure. As economic activity moves downward, small enterprisers must increasingly be thrown out of business to protect the profits of the big corporations. In Italy, after Mussolini came to power, small enterprisers in industry and banking disappeared by the scores of thousands, more rapidly and more of them than in other nations. The state pursues a policy of encouraging industrial concentration and trustification, often by force, but usually by means of lower taxes, loans, subsidies, and government assumption of losses. An Italian fascist journal, *Economia*, says: "One must eliminate less perfect enterprises which produce at higher prices." Hitler's Germany made promises to help small producers, but actually cartel combinations were favored, even enforced, in the interest of big industry. In both fascist nations, moreover, taxation presses most brutally on the smaller enterprises. One reason for these developments is the greater control of the state by monopoly capitalism; another is the desire to strengthen big industry for purposes of militarism and war. Fascism massacres the independent small producers.

Small storekeepers, too, are massacred. They rallied to fascism to destroy socialist cooperatives and big department stores; the cooperatives were destroyed, in Italy and Germany, but not the big stores, which absorbed most of the business of the old cooperatives. Moreover, survival becomes more difficult as standards of living are lowered. Wages in Italy were severely cut after fascism came to power, as much as 40 per cent during the depression; they were cut nearly 50 per cent in the two Hitler years, 1933-34. The compensation of lower-salaried employees was cut almost as much. Declining mass consumption means fewer sales for the small storekeepers. The Nazis made them lavish promises, including "dividing up" the department stores, but not one of the promises was kept. (One reason was that breaking up the department stores meant throwing salaried employees out of work—an expression of the antagonism between the old and "new" middle class.) Now mass

discontent at high prices is directed against the small storekeepers. A recent dispatch to the *New York Times* says:

Numerous butcher and food-shop proprietors have been arrested. One Nazi leader has advised the police to "use harsher means than protective custody for those trying to plunder the people." The middle-class shopkeepers have been among the most enthusiastic supporters of the National Socialist movement. . . . The measures and denunciations now leveled at them, therefore, taste all the bitterer because they come from men they helped to put in power. As a matter of fact they are more the victims of Nazi economy than profiteers, for wholesale prices have gone up even more rapidly than retail prices. . . . But it is part of the National Socialist plans that the hapless middle-class traders are supposed to absorb the larger share of price increases.

Fascism sharply aggravates the crisis of property in the old middle class of small enterprisers. What of the crisis of employment in the "new" middle class? It, too, is sharply aggravated. Lower levels of economic activity mean the displacement of large numbers of technicians and the greater degradation of their craft function as more of them are forced to plan the limitation of production: to create want in the midst of plenty. A German professor of engineering in 1930, after pointing out that only 20 per cent of technical graduates got jobs for which they were trained and another 20 per cent any kind of job, asked: Is it not time to put a stop to this mass striving for higher learning?" Fascism, as in Italy, made the situation worse: Hitler's Germany cut yearly admissions to the universities from 40,000 to 16,000. This fascist limitation of education throws many teachers into permanent unemployment. Other professional workers are affected by the decline in living standards: the degradation of craft function is tragic, as the need for professional services mounts while their performers are unemployed. According to one student of German fascism: "The professional classes are poorer now than before." Millions of lower-salaried employees are permanently unemployed, while salaries of the employed are cut from 25 per cent up. As in the case of the wage workers, unemployment among employees is "reduced" by cutting salaries and instituting forced labor. The crisis of employment in the "new" middle class can be solved only by releasing the forces of production and consumption which fascism strangles.

Taxation multiplies the burdens of the middle class. The costs of state financial aid to big industry, of the all-devouring bureaucracy, of make-work schemes and greater armaments must be met by taxation. Wages are taxed, but there is a limit, and blood cannot be drawn from a stone. Great corporations and the rich evade taxes. So the middle class pays, and pays. Italy's national debt is immense, increased by fascism to nearly one-half the national wealth. Hitler in two years added twenty billion marks to the national debt, and in desperation has virtually stolen the savings deposits and insurance of the middle class to meet the state's financial needs. Taxation becomes expropriation.

What happens to the middle class under fascism is a continuation of what happens to it in democratic nations under the conditions of capitalist decline: consider the plight of the class in our own country. But fascism makes things worse, as the crisis of capitalism becomes worse. And as they become worse, fascism must strengthen its repressive measures and reactionary ideals. It urges war as an ideal

*This is almost as true of the peasantry, whose propertied layers are rallied to fascism against the propertyless majority. Fascism in Italy and Germany encourages agriculture to promote national economic self-sufficiency (primarily for war purposes) and to consolidate the peasantry as a reactionary force. But that is done by means of higher prices, which lower standards of living among the wage workers and middle class and lead to economic disaster. The Italian peasantry has been burdened with debt by land-improvement schemes out of which speculators reaped great profits, while the small minority of proprietors are favored against the majority of tenants and farm laborers. In Germany the financial aid of the state and greater incomes from higher prices have been used mainly to pay debts; the great landed estates are favored and unemployed workers are forced to work on them at practically no pay: a new form of serf labor. Fascism has multiplied the burdens of taxation. In Europe, where production is low, fascism may encourage agriculture. But not in the United States, where the agrarian crisis is largely one of overproduction. What can fascism offer the 3,000,000 American farmers who, the experts agree, are unnecessary in an efficient agriculture? In the United States, even more than elsewhere, the agrarian problem can be solved only by releasing the forces of production and consumption.

and a way of life. It limits education and degrades it to the level of black magic: for fascism wages war on enlightenment and progress. The irrational is exalted, the appeal to "brawn, instinct, tribal customs, and blood." Il Duce, der Führer: they become god-emperors, as did the Caesars

of old Rome. For fascism is the modern Caesarism: the organization of disintegration and decline and the stifling of progress. Fascism means the death of civilization. It calls for a rally of the forces of life to struggle against an approaching death.

Britain Tightens Control in India

By T. A. BISSON

NEARLY eight years after the appointment of the Simon Commission the British Parliament has finally passed the Government of India bill, embodying a new constitution for India. Our American newspapers, following the British lead, speak of this constitution as a "reform," as an advance toward "self-government." Reading these dispatches, one might be pardoned for believing that the British were about to retire from India with their self-imposed task of "tutelage" well and faithfully accomplished. But the headlines are more than usually deceptive. In this mid-depression and pre-war era colonies are not so lightly turned adrift, especially when they are strategically and economically as important as India.

The process of constitution-making began in 1927 with the "all-white" Simon Commission, which was boycotted from end to end of India. With the advent of a Labor government in England, an improvement in the atmosphere was sought through the round-table conference method. In July, 1930, Governor General Irwin went so far as to declare that the conference was regarded "not as a mere meeting for discussion, but as a joint assembly of representatives of both countries on whose agreement precise proposals to Parliament may be founded." This statement took no account of the fact that the Indian delegates to the conference were hand-picked by the Governor General. Nor did it envisage the Conservative capture of the government in 1931. Three successive sessions of the conference met in 1930, 1931, and 1932, but the draft proposals of the White Paper issued by the British government in March, 1933, somehow omitted the majority of the hopeful reforms discussed in the conference. These proposals were then turned over to a Joint Select Committee of Parliament, dominated by Conservatives, for eighteen months of critical examination. Their report in November, 1934, was prefaced by this statement: "No scheme for the future government of India is, of course, at present in existence which can be said to have been agreed on even unofficially between representatives of the two countries." On this basis the committee proceeded to insert a series of drastically conservative amendments into the White Paper proposals. The result, with the addition of certain reactionary changes by the House of Commons, was the Government of India Act of 1935.

The bedrock of this new Indian constitution—a stroke of imperialist genius—is the provision for a federation of the provinces (better, countries) of British India and the Indian states. Growing nationalist forces in British India had rendered increasingly untenable the existing set-up of an irresponsible central government and partially responsible provincial government. On the other hand, the continued maintenance of the autocratic authority wielded in their

states by the Indian princes, in the face of the national-democratic unrest in British India, could be guaranteed solely by the British connection. What could be more logical than an alliance of the imperialist overlords and the native autocrats for the joint protection of their equally menaced positions? The new constitution cements this union in the carefully turned phrases of a legal document. No attempt is made to reconcile the basic clash between the autocracy of the Indian states and the quasi-democracy of the British-Indian provinces. The Indian princes will be represented at Delhi by their personal nominees in both houses of the federal legislature. The powers transferred to the federal government by the princes will be much more limited in scope than those transferred by the provinces. In addition, the Governor General will retain "paramountcy" over the powers not transferred to the federation by the states, and will thus be able to exert considerable leverage on the states which are members of the federation. A solid anti-nationalist and anti-democratic body, specially linked to the Governor General, is thus introduced into the federal government as a counterpoise to the nationalist movement.

This *mésalliance* is worked out to the last detail in the provisions for the Council of State and the Federal Assembly—the two houses of the federal legislature. The population of the Indian states is considerably less than one-fourth that of India as a whole. Yet in the Council of State the princes will nominate 104 out of 260 members, or 40 per cent of the total; while in the Federal Assembly the princes will nominate 125, or one-third, of the total 375 members. In the Council of State the princely bloc will require only twenty-seven additional votes from the British-Indian side for an absolute majority; in the Federal Assembly it will need only sixty-three additional votes for a majority.

The composition of the British-Indian side of the federal legislature is even more ingeniously devised. Each of the numerous British-Indian racial and religious communities and special interests is allotted a fixed number of seats in the two houses of the legislature. With approximately one-fourth the population of British India, the Moslems—traditional bulwark of British rule—are allotted one-third of the British-Indian seats in both houses. The caste Hindus, on the other hand, who constitute a clear majority of the population and supply the largest number of militant Indian nationalists, are given only 86 of the 250 British-Indian seats in the Federal Assembly. A handful of British residents—fewer than 100,000, if the British troops are excluded—is given seven seats in the Council of State and fourteen in the Assembly. Special seats are reserved to commerce and industry and to the landholders, constituting in effect a plural representation since their position will enable them to obtain

their full share of seats from the regular constituencies. Inequalities exist even in the allotment of these special seats. In the Assembly eleven seats are given to commerce and industry, but only ten to labor; the landowners are given seven seats, but the agricultural laborers—numbering scores of millions—are given none. Lest nationalism sift through even these defenses, election to the British-Indian seats in the federal legislature is made indirect: by the upper houses of the provincial legislatures for the Council of State, and by the lower houses of the provincial legislatures for the Assembly. The retrograde nature of this provision may be gauged by the fact that members of the present Legislative Assembly of British India have been directly elected from territorial constituencies since the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1918.

From a British-Indian side of the legislature so composed and chosen the princely bloc will readily find sufficient allies to enable it to dominate legislative proceedings. Sir Samuel Hoare's words in Parliament are significant: "I would ask honorable members to look very carefully at the proposals . . . for the constitution of the federal legislature . . . and if they analyze these proposals I think they will agree with me that it will be almost impossible, short of a landslide, for the extremists to get control of the federal center." It will be virtually impossible, in other words, to secure a majority in the federal legislature for a nationalist measure, much less a proposal designed to mitigate the extreme inequalities of wealth in India.

The executive branch of the federation constitutes the second line of defense against Indian nationalism. Three departments of the federal government, including the army and foreign affairs, are reserved for exclusive control by the Governor General. The other departments, including finance, are nominally controlled by Indian ministers responsible to the legislature. In this transferred sphere, however, the Governor General may intervene for a number of purposes, such as to prevent grave menace to the peace of India, to safeguard the credit of the federation, to prevent commercial discrimination (that is, against British concerns), to safeguard the interests of minorities, and to prevent the enactment of discriminatory or penal tariffs against British goods. To make this right of intervention effective, the Governor General is vested with a series of "discretionary" powers. These include the veto, which cannot be overridden by vote of the legislature; the passing of "Governor General's acts" without the consent of the legislature; the promulgation of emergency ordinances having the effect of law; and, in the event of a breakdown of the constitutional machinery, the assumption by proclamation of all powers vested in any federal authority. In addition, special safeguards are effective in the sphere of finance. Non-votable expenditures amount to some 80 per cent of the federal budget. Over the remaining 20 per cent the Governor General may restore amounts reduced or rejected by legislative vote. Currency and exchange is intrusted to a Reserve Bank, and railways to a specially constituted Railway Board, in both of which British influence is decisive.

In the provinces of British India the franchise has been extended to include roughly one-fourth of the adult population. It is still based, in the main, on property qualifications. Seats in the provincial legislatures are portioned out to the various communities and special interests, including Sikhs,

Moslems, Anglo-Indians, Britishers, landholders, commerce and industry, labor, and women. Separate electorates for these groups have been perpetuated and extended, despite the fact that communal voting has been condemned by all observers of its effects, including the Simon Commission. Hindu-Moslem and other inter-communal antagonisms will thereby be strengthened, and the achievement of unity along nationalist lines correspondingly weakened. Upper legislative houses are provided in six of the eleven provinces, although heretofore the provincial legislatures have always been unicameral. The conservative elements are also buttressed by the property basis of the franchise and the plural representation accorded the bourgeois interests.

Executive authority in the provinces will be vested in a British Governor, advised by a Council of Ministers responsible to the legislature over the whole field of provincial administration. Effective ministerial responsibility, however, is limited by a series of "discretionary" powers intrusted to the Governor, closely parallel to those held by the Governor General. The Ministry of Justice, a key post in combating terrorism and civil disobedience, is subordinated to the Governor by special provisions. Strict financial and economic safeguards, similar to those in force at the center, are also effective in the provinces.

Hardly less important than the positive features of this general constitutional structure is the lack of any provision affecting the present status of the army and the civil services. At one time the round-table conferences had toyed with the idea of transferring the recruitment and control of Indian civil and police officials from the Secretary of State for India to the federal government—a measure which might have hastened the Indianization of these services, now predominantly British in personnel. No such provision, however, was included in the act, and the "steel frame" of an imperial civil service and an imperial police force will be maintained.

The problem of the so-called Indian army is even more fundamental. More than one-third of its troops are British—some 60,000. Early this year, out of a total of 5,773 commissioned officers, 5,578 were British and 195 were Indian. It was hoped that under the new constitution decisive steps might be taken toward Indianizing the officer ranks of the army. But the Joint Select Committee declared: "It is in our judgment impossible to include in the Constitution Act or in any other statute a provision for the complete Indianization of the army within a specified period of time." The consequences of this decision are momentous. It rules out the possibility of effective self-rule for India for an indefinite period. It necessitates the continued reservation of the Defense Department to the exclusive control of the Governor General. It places a non-votable army charge on the federal budget which has averaged at least 50 per cent of British India's central expenditures since the war. (A British soldier costs 850 rupees per year; an Indian soldier 285. Indian officers could probably be obtained at an even greater proportionate saving. Funds thus saved could be used for education and public health.)

It is not unnatural that this constitution has been opposed by virtually all shades of political opinion in British India. The eclipse of Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, crushed by Governor General Willingdon's repressive ordinances, has had the effect of demonstrating India's rejection of the act even more emphatically than would otherwise

have been possible. Last November, for the first time in a decade, the Congress party entered the general elections to the Legislative Assembly of British India. It swept the elective seats in the Hindu constituencies and gained sufficient Moslem allies to dominate the Assembly, despite the strength of the government-appointed bloc. In the ensuing legislative session the government was defeated on vote after vote and forced to invoke its overriding powers. The Assembly rejected the federal aspect of the new constitution by seventy-four votes to fifty-eight as "fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable," and recommended that the Government of India "advise His Majesty's Government not to proceed with any legislation based on this scheme." The section of the army-appropriation bill submitted to the Assembly was cut to one rupee by a vote of seventy-nine to forty-eight, but the cut was restored by the Governor General. Amendments to the finance bill, including one reducing the salt tax, were similarly overruled by the Governor General.

Though politically ineffective, this opposition afforded a dramatic demonstration of the irresponsibility of the present

Government of India. No such tour de force will be possible in the new Federal Assembly, where the nationalist elements will be definitely subordinated. Since the Congress party presumably intends to enter the elections for the new legislature, the constitution will receive a thoroughgoing trial at the very outset. It can hardly be doubted that its inability to satisfy the aims of the nationalist majority of India will be demonstrated in short order. Under these circumstances, the extreme rigidity of the new act—a few princes can block amendment of nearly all important sections—will encourage renewed resort to direct action. What form this will take is still uncertain. It is clear, however, that the Congress party's ineffectiveness has subjected it to increasing pressure from the left, both inside its ranks and out. The notable strikes carried through by the Indian workers during the past two years have served to strengthen this pressure. Before the struggle for India's national independence can be fought to an uncompromising conclusion, the present supremacy of its middle-class leadership may have to be overthrown by the Indian worker and *ryot*.

Moscow Frowns on Abortions

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, July 15

DURING the last month the Soviet press has been full of what every girl should know. Of course, all girls here know what they should know. There is only one bit of new information: abortions are harmful and dangerous and undesirable. It is much better to beget babies.

The Moscow cinemas have been demonstrating a picture called "The Private Life of Peter Vinogradov" which would be popular in the more conservative communities of certain conservative foreign countries. Peter is handsome and interesting, a good student, an inventor, and a Communist. The young ladies fall for him. First the girl friend of one comrade succumbs to his lure. Then the girl friend of another comrade. But Peter's intentions are not "serious." He is only "playing around." Both girls, accordingly, leave him, go back to their former friends, and get married, while Peter is reduced to the misery of single life.

"Go to Zags, Young Man," is the latest Soviet slogan. "Zags" is the marriage-registration bureau. It also has a divorce division. A. Soltz, the outstanding Bolshevik puritan, wants the men to go there too when the need arises. Writing in the *Pravda*, Soltz advises against the present practice of granting divorces in the absence of the father. It is not enough that the man pay alimony. He must be concerned with the upbringing of his children. But suppose he does not care? It is his social duty to care, comes the Bolshevik reply. And frightened by the recent propaganda campaign, many Communists who have not cared for years have suddenly begun to make telephone calls to their ex-wives inquiring how little Katya is getting on or whether Ivan has been promoted.

"In the land of Soviets," says the *Pravda*, "the family is a big and serious matter." Brilliant editorial writers

abroad will say, "I told you so," and declare that they always knew the Bolsheviks would ultimately cease their attacks on the family. But the fact is that the Bolsheviks never attacked the family. The stress of the revolution inevitably broke up many families, for it broadened and exacerbated the conflict between fathers and sons which all countries and all ages have experienced. This was a by-product of the epochal Russian social upheaval. It was never a goal. Communists know that at certain periods in mankind's history no family existed. They admit, theoretically, the possibility of the family's demise. But they have no substitute institution for the family and, far from undermining it, they have fortified it.

In the past, the struggle within families was part of the class struggle. When a parent was counter-revolutionary, when the father was a petty merchant or capitalistic peasant, he could not live in peace with his children who leaned toward the Komsomol League of Communist Youth. The family was torn between political factions. Today, however, the class war is on the wane, and many people who grew up under the revolution have children of their own. The regime, accordingly, has no dread of the undesirable political influence and only welcomes the necessary moral and cultural influence of parents upon their offspring. The authorities are now stressing the wisdom of "honor thy father and mother." Aged parents should be helped by their children; boys and girls must be brought away from the street and drawn into warm, loving home life. Soviet society is concentrating unusual attention on these matters because its leaders realize how much harm came to the family during the stormy years of revolutionary turmoil.

"A bad family man cannot be a good Soviet citizen," a *Pravda* editorial announces. This is the spirit of 1935. It was inconceivable in 1923 when students boycotted their Nepman fathers or in 1930 when children interfered with

the activities of their anti-collectivist parents. But the Soviet family is a different kind of family, the Bolsheviks insist. The woman can always find work. She is in all respects the equal of her husband. And "in the Soviet Union," according to the *Pravda*, "only real, big, unsullied and proud love can and should be the stimulus to marriage." The marriage act, in other words, must not cover a temporary relationship which can be ended in a few months by easy divorce. For a child may be born after the husband has deserted his wife. Such "frivolous conduct," *Pravda* explains, is "anti-social." It is rooted in the bourgeois conception that woman is a slave, a chattel, "a commodity that can be used and then discarded." It is a product of the property habit. Those who maintain that it is petty bourgeois to be interested in a family are themselves the lowest kind of petty bourgeois. "They defend the rights of women in public and at home they behave like pigs toward their wives and children."

Woman is still the weaker sex, *Pravda* admits, and the state must shield her. The offenders are almost always the men. "In our country, no one is compelled to remain married against his will. We have no despicable divorce trials. But the right to divorce which the Soviet code grants is not the right to license."

Then this official Communist publication makes a striking statement: "A family without children loses its *raison d'être*." It is rumored, therefore, that a childless woman will not be allowed to have an abortion unless there are convincing considerations of health. She cannot argue that she is poor. The government will help her, and so must the father. A prohibition against "killing the first child" would probably eliminate much philandering and promiscuity and encourage a more serious attitude toward marriage—although it must be said that Russians marry very young, and sometimes the dominant impression in university dormitories is the babble and crying of babies.

Propaganda against abortions is nothing new in the Soviet Union. I remember seeing in 1926 an educational film on the dangers of such an operation. The decree of December, 1920, which legalized abortions, also expressed the hope that they would ultimately disappear as a result of the strengthening of the socialist state. Physicians and nurses to whom women come for abortions invariably try to dissuade them. Special commissions carefully investigate every applicant for an abortion and many requests have been refused (hence, probably, a certain number of illegal operations). After the second month of pregnancy it is practically impossible to obtain permission for an abortion. One of the permanent mottoes of the central Moscow Institute for the Care of Mother and Child is: "Use Contraceptives to Avoid Abortions." But Soviet authorities likewise pointed out that since the operations here were performed in the best clinics by expert physicians, few deaths (one per 23,000) resulted from abortions and even very few serious cases of blood poisoning. They proudly contrasted this with the dreadful toll of "underground" surgery in bourgeois countries. In the last month, however, the papers have been full of articles by professors of medicine, directors of clinics, gynecologists, and the like, on the harm caused by abortions, performed under any conditions. Such agitation might be a desirable antidote to the earlier light-hearted approach to interrupted pregnancy. But when the press hammers away

at abortions literally every day, and when this propaganda is accompanied by a glorification of festive marriage ceremonies, by emphasis on the holiness of marital obligations, by the announcement of prizes to mothers who have delivered triplets and quadruplets, by prominently displayed articles from women who have never subjected themselves to abortions, and by public praise to a low-salaried village school teacher who, mother of four children, nevertheless did not reject a fifth "although it is difficult to feed them all"—then one thinks of Mussolini.

The annual excess of births over deaths in the U.S.S.R. is more than three million, more than that of all the rest of Europe. With mortality, especially infant mortality, dropping, and general health conditions rapidly improving, the figure is sure to grow. Even at the present birth-rate, the Soviet Union will have a population of 200,000,000 nine years from now. This is an important political as well as social fact.

"Yes," a Communist said to me the other day, "the fascists also encourage more births. But their children are condemned to a bleak life in a jobless world of crisis and medieval reaction, whereas socialism guarantees a bright, happy future. Look at our new generation in the parks, summer camps, and streets." Nevertheless the crowded housing conditions of Soviet cities should deter the breeding of larger families. The apartment shortage itself would make any strict anti-abortion regulations a distinct hardship, particularly since illegal abortions could scarcely flourish under socialized medicine and strict Soviet control. The economic situation, however, has improved in the last two years, and many families are housed in new apartments. There is security. It is felt, consequently, that the more violent form of birth limitation ought to be checked, especially because men frequently take advantage of it to live a life free from the responsibilities of marriage.

In attempting to fathom the new intensive agitation against abortions, some commentators have hit on the clever idea that it is actuated by military considerations. Now the science of war has of course undergone very radical change in recent years but we have not yet heard that babies of six will man the trenches or operate airplanes. Less birth limitation in 1935 could only produce more soldiers eighteen years from now and by that time the world, and war also, will be different, and I cannot imagine Moscow is thinking of such distant days. Nor is there warrant for the assumption that the father of several children will fight with greater enthusiasm for his socialist fatherland. On the contrary, he may claim exemption. Do not unmarried young men often make the best fighters?

The simple fact is that the commissions which pass on abortions have hitherto been too lax in approving applications. The general spirit created by the present campaign will militate against easy "summer-time" relationships. Girls will no longer be "conservative" or even "counter-revolutionary" for refusing to yield to masculine importunity. More consideration will be given to the demands of family life, and fathers and mothers will be excused if their political and social activities suffer because they must spend time with one another and their children. These changes, and economic improvement, social stability, and the universal atmosphere of relaxation and normality are sure soon to heal the wounds inflicted on the family in the revolution's past.

Rhode Island Proves Nothing

By VERNON C. NORTON

Pawtucket, August 7

THE tremendous campaign of the textile interests in Rhode Island against the AAA processing tax undoubtedly helped to defeat Antonio Prince, the Democratic candidate for Congressman, in the recent election. But apart from this factor, the sweeping victory of the Republican judge, Charles F. Risk, in the First Congressional District cannot be interpreted as a repudiation of the New Deal. The collapse of the Democratic Party in an industrial district which nine months ago gave Francis B. Condon a 21,000 plurality must be charged to a deep-seated division within the party organization and to an intense racial feeling which gave impetus to an effective whispering campaign against the Democratic nominee. The vote was also a gesture of resentment against the recent operations of the Democratic machine.

Governor Theodore Francis Green, elected in 1932 on the crest of the Roosevelt wave and on a liberal platform, has ruthlessly abandoned his pre-election promises and built up the party machine as an organ of the same corporate interests which for so many years worked through the Republican Party when it was in power. The Democratic Party has now fallen into the control of two multimillionaires, Governor Green and United States Senator Peter G. Gerry, and from the day when it came into complete control of the state government it has made a rapid retreat from the principles it espoused while it was in the legislative minority.

The party split, in the campaign just concluded, developed openly over the utilities issue. The Democratic organization in the city of Pawtucket, the largest municipality in the First District, sponsored a program for public ownership of its electric-utility system—in accordance with recommendations made by Governor Green in his inaugural message but not in accordance with the actions of Green and his supporters since he took office. Lawyers associated with the Green-Gerry machine had been acting as lobbyists for the utilities in the Assembly, fighting against the enabling acts which would empower Pawtucket to set up its own distributing system and to issue up to \$5,000,000 in bonds to finance the system. Thomas P. McCoy, Democratic boss of Pawtucket, then state budget director by appointment of Governor Green, controlled a powerful block of votes in the house and fought the administration's effort to put outright appointive power in the hands of the Chief Executive without definite tenure of office for any appointee. He also strongly supported the municipal-ownership program previously adopted by the party. When the utility lobbyists, most of them Democratic lawyers who for years had been committed to the party's program of competing municipal plants and more stringent state regulation, succeeded in killing the enabling acts, McCoy revolted. He was summarily removed from his position as budget director.

In the Congressional campaign McCoy led a militant minority to the convention and over the protest of Cornelius C. Moore of Newport, recognized as Senator Gerry's

agent, he successfully sponsored a plank committing Antonio Prince, the Democratic nominee, to support of the "death-sentence" clause in the federal holding-company bill. Moore, serving as floor manager for the machine, was the registered counsel for the utilities during the legislative sessions when the Pawtucket municipal program was sabotaged in committee.

McCoy himself sponsored Felix A. Toupin for Mayor of Woonsocket, second-largest city in the First District, as his Congressional preference, but the Green-Gerry machine was in supreme control to nominate Prince at the convention. There is no primary law in Rhode Island. Toupin achieved fame in 1923-24 when, as lieutenant-governor, he presided over and dominated the state senate during a filibuster which eventually forced reform amendments into the state constitution. Mayor Toupin had been one of the principal targets of the Green machine. Prince is a French Canadian. Toupin is of French descent. Both live in Woonsocket and each claims control over the French voters who comprise about 25 per cent of the vote in the First District. Prince became involved some eight years ago in a politically embarrassing situation when a strong group of French Catholics challenged the authority of the Irish bishop, William A. Hickey. Prince is still associated in the public mind with the church revolt, and a rebellion among the Irish voters, especially the women, helped to defeat him and to break down the Democratic machine. Hundreds of devout French Catholics joined the Irish in resenting the Prince candidacy.

Several other causes had a cumulative effect on the outcome of the election. Prince refused to utter a word in support of the death-sentence clause, which led sincere Roosevelt supporters to suspect that he had been silenced by Senator Gerry and Congressman John M. O'Connell, elected from the Second District. Both Gerry and O'Connell had opposed the President's efforts to break the holding companies' control. Sentiment for Roosevelt was strong in the First District but many individuals deserted the Democratic candidate merely in order to join in a united attack on the Green-Gerry machine. Judge Risk, contrary to the general impression, did not concentrate his attack on the New Deal. He was disturbed when the anti-Administration press headlined his speeches in such a way as to make them appear outright denunciations of all Roosevelt policies.

The vote also expressed a widespread rebellion against Governor Green's political methods. He has tolerated a system of dual office-holding by Senators and Representatives in the Rhode Island General Assembly, as a result of which he controls Democratic caucuses in each house by keeping a majority of the party legislators on the state payroll. He ousted twenty-five District Court judges and clerks before their terms expired because the politicians wanted the positions. He traded Superior Court judgeships in order to get a partisan measure through an otherwise hostile Assembly. He condoned the action of a District Court judge, as chairman of a Democratic Party town committee, in bringing

about the reduction of a World War veteran's relief allotment because the man intended to vote for Judge Risk, himself a veteran. By these and other tactics Green has been building a personal machine to support his ambition for a seat in the United States Senate. The defeat of Prince was in large measure a defeat of Green. And in so far as the issue of public utilities entered into the election, its outcome must be construed not as a repudiation of Roosevelt but as a defense of his more advanced policies.

Correspondence

The System

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

It seems to me that liberals never touch fundamentals. Frederick C. Lendrum's review of Hugh Cabot's book "The Doctor's Bill" is an instance. Could Mr. Lendrum not see, and could he not point out, that what is mainly wrong with our medical service is not so much the service itself as the economic system of which it is a by-product, namely, a system which makes people sick and drives them crazy?

A system which exploits the people cannot heal them. State medicine therefore could do no good. You cannot "socialize" medicine unless the things basic to life, fundamental to health, and essential to happiness are first socialized. The first step must be socialization of the means of wealth production, thereby permitting a more equitable distribution of the necessities, comforts, and luxuries of life. Rest is the most effective cure for illness, but how can a man rest who has to work for a living? Absence from worry is the best mental relief, but who can relax under a system of dog-eat-dog? Competition kills; cooperation cures. Capitalism opposes cooperation; socialism promotes it. Under socialism alone we can have socialist medicine.

Cleveland Heights, Ohio, August 1 JOSEPH MANLET

A New Scottsboro Case

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The attention of your readers is called to the case of John Montjoy, Negro youth of Covington, Kentucky, who has been sentenced to be hanged on an alleged charge of rape, and whose hope lies in widespread petition on the part of all who are concerned in securing justice and equal rights for Negroes.

An investigation conducted by a committee of representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union, the International Labor Defense, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People reveals the following facts in the case:

- (1) Negroes are and have been excluded from the jury panel.
- (2) The alleged confession of the accused was obtained seven days after arrest at 3:30 in the morning, under circumstances strongly indicating that the defendant's charge of duress and coercion is true.
- (3) Although the police had the opportunity for submitting the woman to an immediate medical examination after the alleged act, no such examination was made.
- (4) The court-appointed defense counsel presented no evidence of any kind in defense, not even putting the defendant on the stand.

On the above facts the committee bases its appeal for support in a campaign to secure reversal of the conviction and a new trial, which is now before the Court of Appeals. Prompt

action in the form of petition, letters, and telegrams is earnestly requested. All such communications should be sent to Judge Rogers Clay, Kentucky Court of Appeals, Frankfort, Kentucky.

MARY D. BRITE, Secretary, Cincinnati Branch,
American Civil Liberties Union

EDWARD LEAVITT, Acting Secretary, Cincinnati Branch,
International Labor Defense

JAMES T. WHITNEY, Secretary, Cincinnati Branch,
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

GEORGE A. HEDGER, Chairman, Cincinnati Branch,
American Civil Liberties Union

Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10

Business Is Better

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I notice that the Walgreen Company has just declared a dividend of 35 cents a share on the common stock, which is 5 cents a share more than the last quarter dividend. A friend of mine is employed as a cashier by this company, whose president is C. R. Walgreen, arch-American and red-baiter extraordinary. The Walgreen-instigated probe into communistic propaganda at the University of Chicago ended recently when it proved to be too ridiculous even for the Illinois legislature.

A few days ago my friend received notice that effective July 7 her hours would be increased from forty-eight to fifty-four per week at no increase in salary. The hours are so distributed that she works seven days a week. Every other Sunday she has a half day off. The intervening Sunday she works from 1:30 p.m. to 12 midnight. As it usually takes her a half-hour to check up after working hours, she has an eleven-hour shift on that day and also on every Wednesday. It is her understanding that this increase in hours is general throughout the organization and will result in the discharge of several hundred employees.

Chicago, July 10

JAMES BROWN

"Dr. Ira Hille describes the book as a clear, succinct, non-emotional, authoritative and conservative exposition of the practical factors involved in making marriage successful on the sexual level. . . . It is primarily concerned with the conduct of the honeymoon and with the technique of sexual performance."—Dr. Morris Fishbein. Price \$2.00 (postage 15c extra)

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Labor and Industry

The Nation Index of Labor Welfare

DESPITE a sharp decline in factory employment and payrolls during June, *The Nation* Index of Labor Welfare indicates that working-class living standards rose slightly from the previous month. This somewhat paradoxical development may be explained by the fact that the losses suffered in the manufacturing industries were largely offset by a 30 per cent increase in the earnings of anthracite and bituminous coal miners, together with smaller gains in retail trade and other non-manufacturing industries. Since employment fell more sharply than wages, average weekly earnings were somewhat higher in the face of a 0.2 per cent decline in the cost of living. This brought real wages to 99.3 per cent of the 1932 average—the highest since March. Although the number of unemployed rose approximately 100,000 during the month, its effect on the index was counterbalanced by the exceptionally large drop in the number of persons in rural districts receiving relief. In 140 of the largest cities relief rolls showed a seasonal decline of approximately 3 per cent, but for the country as a whole the drop was nearly 7 per cent.

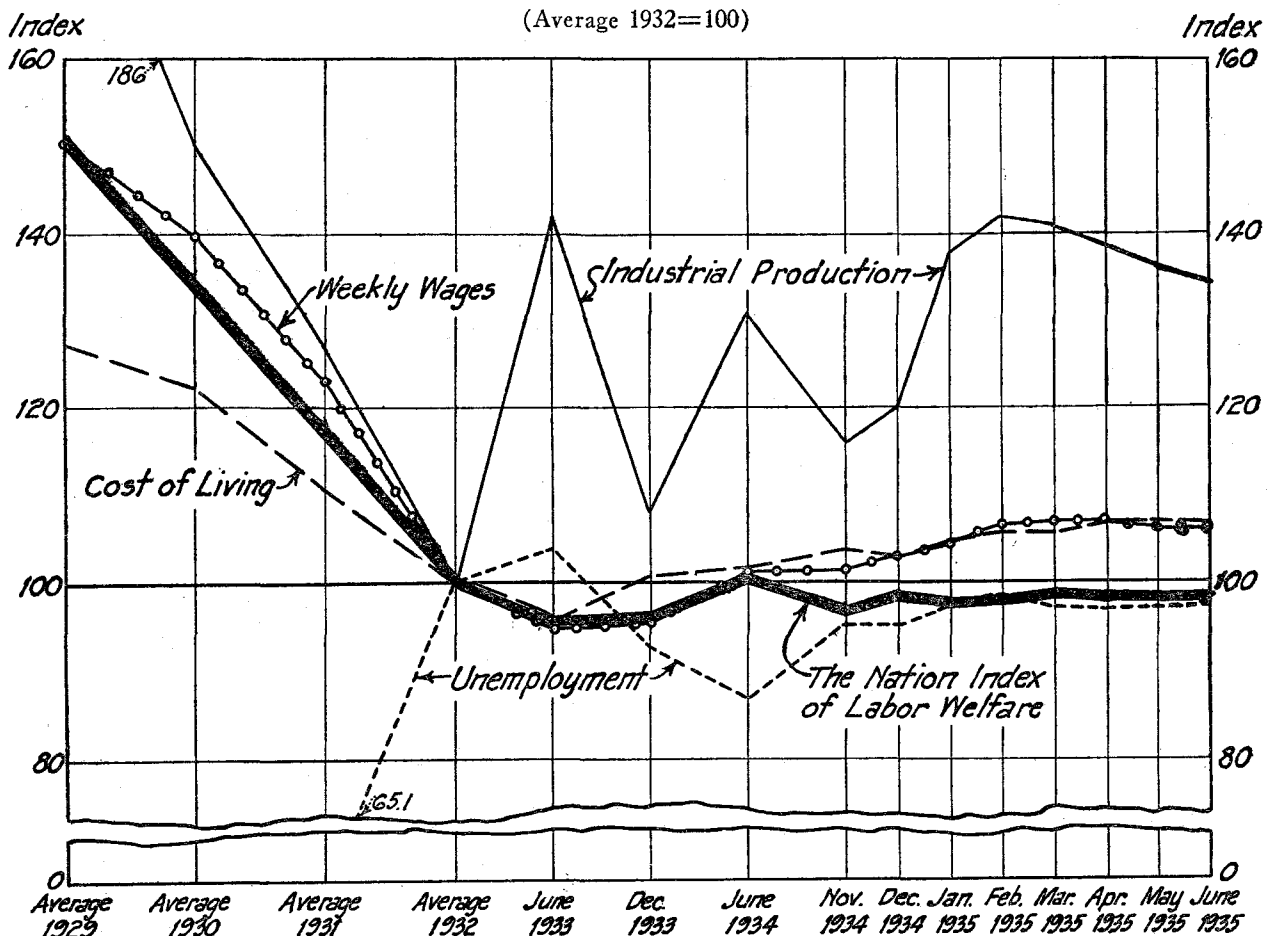
The fractional gains obtained by the working class during June lose much of their significance, however, when it is realized that after more than two years of general business recovery living standards remain materially below the

lowest point of the depression in 1932. Weekly wages have risen 5 per cent above the 1932 level, but the cost of living—according to the latest government estimate—has increased approximately 6 per cent. Compared with 1929, wages have dropped 30 per cent, while the cost of living has gone down only 18 per cent. In terms of real purchasing power, the average industrial worker was receiving almost exactly the same wage in June, 1935, as he received in the same month of 1934, but unemployment had risen by at least 600,000 during this period and over a million more persons were on relief, leaving *The Nation* Index 2 per cent lower than a year ago. The preliminary indices for June are compared with the revised figures of the previous month and with June, 1934, in the following table:

	(1932=100)		
	June 1935	May 1935	June 1934
Industrial Production	134*	136	131
Average Weekly Wages	105.3*	105.1†	101
Cost of Living	106.0*	106.2†	102
Real Wages	99.3*	99.0	99.3
Unemployment	96*	95	88
Index of Labor Welfare	98.2*	97.9†	100.2

* Preliminary. † Revised.

THE CHART OF LABOR WELFARE
(Average 1932=100)



The Pullman Porters Win

By EDWARD BERMAN

WORKING-CLASS Negroes won a decisive victory on July 1 when the National Mediation Board certified the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters as the duly authorized representative of the porters and maids employed by the Pullman Company. This certification and the election which preceded it were the climax in a courageous struggle for labor organization and collective bargaining which has been carried on for more than a decade against great odds.

Aggressive attempts to organize the Pullman porters in an independent union attracted public attention about 1920. Toward the end of that year the Pullman Company countered with the usual device of company unionism. From that time on the efforts of the porters to make the employee-representation scheme function effectively in the workers' interest or to organize an independent union were met by the whole barrage of opposition which employers developed so effectively in the decade of the twenties. In February, 1921, the company established its Pullman Porters' Benefit Association to provide sickness, incapacity, and death benefits. As early as 1914 it had put into effect a pension plan for aged employees. In February, 1926, it introduced an employee stock-ownership plan. It also put into operation an extensive scheme of welfare work, with a newspaper for employees, as well as workers' choruses, bands and orchestras.

The porters and their leaders at first attempted to use these devices for the purpose of improving the lot of the workers. The company countered by employing spies and discharging porters who were too active in the interest of their fellows. The leaders finally realized that the condition of the workers could be improved only by organizing an absolutely independent union not subject to the influence of the Pullman Company, and on August 25, 1925, steps were taken to establish the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Its officers, with one exception, were porters of long standing in the company's service. They gave up their jobs to become leaders of the union or were soon discharged for their activities. The one exception was A. Philip Randolph, a prominent publicist and leader among Negroes. Since 1925 all the officers have stayed with the organization, generally without salaries of any kind, eking out an often precarious living for themselves and their families by engaging in various small business enterprises.

The organization of the independent union led to increased opposition by the Pullman Company. Spying became more intense and effective, and discharges of active unionists became common. Porters many years in the service found themselves let out for reasons which were mere subterfuges. It came to be worth a man's job to show an active interest in the new union. Yet hundreds of porters continued to pay dues and to attend meetings.

In 1926 the union tried unsuccessfully to get consideration from the Interstate Commerce Commission on the question of wages. From 1930 to the beginning of 1934 it attempted with equal lack of success to get an injunction

against the company under the terms of the Railway Labor Act of 1926. Meanwhile in 1933 the Railway Emergency Act had been passed. Among its provisions was one which had the effect of outlawing the company unions. Unfortunately, however, whether by oversight or otherwise, the act made no reference to the Pullman Company or to the express companies. In the autumn of 1933 the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters began a campaign of publicity to have the Pullman Company brought within the scope of the act. With the aid of Coordinator Eastman, who included proposals to this effect in his recommendations to Congress, an act was passed in June, 1934, correcting the defects in the previous legislation. The porters could now appeal to the National Mediation Board for the right to be recognized as the official agency of the porters for the purposes of collective bargaining. In preparation for the test it knew was coming, the Pullman Company, in October, 1934, reorganized its company union. The grosser forms of company influence were not so apparent in the new constitution. Presumably the organization was to be financed exclusively by the employees themselves, but it was specified that its officers should be employees of the company.

The fight between the new company union and the Brotherhood to secure official recognition from the National Mediation Board began late in 1934. At the direction of the board an election to enable the porters and maids to express their preference was conducted from May 27 to June 27. It resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Brotherhood. Of a total of 8,316 eligible votes, the Brotherhood captured 5,931 and the company union only 1,422. In only three cities, Louisville, Memphis, and Atlanta, did the company union receive a majority of the eligible votes. The Brotherhood won majorities in 25 cities; it also received the overwhelming majority of votes cast by mail. The Brotherhood has already taken steps to initiate negotiations with the Pullman Company. The real fruits of victory will not be realized until a collective agreement is secured, but the chances for such an agreement are excellent.

The reason for the porters' long and determined fight for an independent union is to be found of course in wages that are unbelievably low and conditions of work that most unskilled white workers would consider intolerable. The Pullman porter is regarded as an aristocrat by the workers of his race. The Pullman Company itself not only depends upon him to furnish courteous and efficient service to its patrons, but frankly acknowledges that the opinion which the traveling public has of the Pullman service largely depends upon him. It imposes upon him an enormous variety of tasks, skilled and unskilled; and the traveling public knows how well he performs those tasks.

It is one of the ironies of the status of the Negro in American life, however, that the Pullman porter is one of the worst-exploited workers in the country. A survey covering the year from March, 1934, to February, 1935, shows that the annual income of all porters covered by the sample

investigation was \$880. Porters on regular assignment received in that year \$1,056, while those on extra service received \$624. (Since extra porters must constantly hold themselves in readiness for duty, they have no opportunity to earn additional income.) This income was received only in part from the company. The average wage received by all porters directly from the company was \$879; the sum of \$237 was received in tips, but \$236 was spent for occupational expenses. The weekly income of all porters covered in the survey was only \$16.92, that of porters on regular assignment \$20.30, and that of extra porters only \$12. Obviously the common impression that porters get large sums in tips is erroneous. Some do, but on the average the amount is about offset by the sum which goes for occupational expenses. The status of the porter is well indicated by the nature and extent of these expenses. He is compelled to furnish his own brushes and shoe-polishing materials. He must pay for his uniforms until he has been in service for ten years. He must eat his meals from the dining car, paying half price for what he gets—and the middle-class American of small income knows that even half-price on a Pullman diner is too much. Moreover, he must sleep at night in the smoking compartment of his car unless a certain upper berth near that compartment happens to be vacant. He does not retire until the occupants of the smoking compartment go to bed. He is subject to call at every moment of the day or night while on service.

As against an average weekly income for the porters of \$16.02, the average wage of all workers in manufacturing industries in the United States in 1934 was \$19.12, in New York State \$23.19, in Illinois \$20.50, and in Wisconsin \$18.29. Against the porters' annual average income of \$880 may be set the "minimum comfort budget" calculated by Professor Ogburn for the War Labor Board for a family of five, which would have cost \$1,516 in 1934. Against it may also be set the "minimum American standard budget" for a family of four established by an employers' organization, the National Industrial Conference Board. In a small city such as Marion, Ohio, this would have cost \$1,129 in 1934. In New York City (and it should be remembered that most porters live in large cities) it would have cost \$1,299.

But this is not the whole story. Hours of service are barbarously long. The porters are paid on a mileage basis, the basic wage being earned when they have traveled 11,000 miles per month. But they work before and after the trains get into motion, and for this "preparatory" and "terminal" time, as it is called, they get no pay. A survey made at the beginning of the present year indicates that on regular runs the porters put in an average of 9.2 per cent of their working time in getting cars ready for occupancy and receiving passengers, and 3.5 per cent in arranging cars after the train has arrived at its terminal. These hours of service are required by the company. Not infrequently, more than the stated time is required after a car has reached the terminal. The variations among individual porters are great. Some put in more than 50 per cent of all their service in the form of preparatory and terminal time. For example, there was the case of a porter required to put in 14 hours and 52 minutes of preparatory time and 3 hours and 5 minutes of terminal time out of a total service period per round trip of 26 hours and 30 minutes. Such cases are not uncommon. The important point is that an average of 12.7 per cent of

all the time the porters spend in service is not paid for.

Investigation shows that in 1934 porters on regular runs worked an average of 317 hours per month, or over 73 hours per week. Contrast this figure with the fact that in the year 1934 workers in all manufacturing industries in the United States averaged just under 35 hours per week. The average net income for porters on regular assignment for the year from March, 1934, to February, 1935, was 27.8 cents an hour. In 1934 workers in all manufacturing industries received an average of 54.8 cents; and workers on federal public works projects, 57.8 cents per hour.

Here then is a group of skilled workers receiving an average annual income of \$880, an average weekly income of \$16.92, and an average hourly income, if they work regularly, of 27.8 cents. While many hundreds of thousands of their fellow-workers remain partly or wholly unemployed, they work 317 hours per month under conditions which are little short of disgraceful. They work, moreover, for a company which has consistently made large profits.

After many years of struggle and persistent devotion, the porters have succeeded in obtaining recognition of their union. It marks a most important step in their fight for decent working conditions. Their victory should give courage to the Negro working class.

Not the Type

By HEYWOOD BROWN

IT is really a pity that Franklin Delano Roosevelt is so obviously not the type around whom an independent labor party could be built up. If only one-third of the things his reactionary opponents say against him were true, Mr. Roosevelt could split the Democratic and Republican parties as soon as 1936 and make the first step toward bringing about a united front of liberals and the left.

Indeed, here and there men are beginning to suggest that the third-party movement indorse Roosevelt in the next Presidential campaign. Any such notion is preposterous. To use the favorite football analogy of the White House, Franklin Roosevelt has no aptitude for picking his holes. He is a running back who always seems just on the point of cutting loose for a long gain only to dart right into a nest of tacklers. Indeed, on several occasions he has emulated the unfortunate young player in California who, with a clear field ahead of him, grew muddled and ran in the wrong direction.

Still, I think that much must go down on the credit side to Mr. Roosevelt on account of some of the enemies which he has made and the manner of attack which has been unleashed against him. I find, for instance, that in certain sections of the country the whispering campaign was by no means whispered. A reader has sent me a copy of *Crow's Pacific Coast Lumber Digest*. This organ of the industry is published in Portland, Oregon, and in it I find an editorial by C. C. Crow entitled *As We Totter on the Brink of Communism*. It reads in part as follows:

Picture this combination:

A President of the United States who is either demented or, if sane, ambitious to overthrow our present form of government and set up one like Russia.

A short-order Congress composed largely of demagogues who jump at the crack of the madman's whip. . . .

An academic-parlor-pink-organized-labor-communist group thoroughly entrenched in governmental offices. . . .

Vicious and radical men elevated to positions of authority and supported with the taxpayers' money, under the guise of relief, so that they may starve the business of the country into submission to their wicked schemes.

In other words, picture the better people in all walks of life in the United States as with fear and trembling on bended knees they pray to God for deliverance from a diabolical set-up which menaces the peace and progress of the entire world.

And, strange as it may seem, this outburst comes from a representative of "the better people" who are insisting that we must have some form of sedition law because the radicals are seeking to create disrespect for our government.

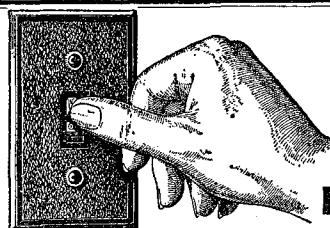
I turn with interest, also, to an editorial in the *New York Times* which appeared a little before the investigation of the utilities propaganda began. The *Times*, of course, was not so vitriolic in its criticism, but in the light of later events its position on the "800,000 telegrams" is not without significance. In speaking of the so-called "death sentence," which by the way was a punishing phrase manufactured by the newspapers themselves, the leading editorial said:

It is stated that more than 800,000 letters and telegrams of protest and appeal reached members of the House within the past two weeks. They were not "form" letters. They came from small investors all over the country who had already lost on other savings and objected violently to having their utilities stocks and bonds made the subject of political attack. Mr. Roosevelt was imprudent enough to describe this sort of evidence of popular feeling in the matter as "falsified."

Well, by now there has been spread upon the records a wealth of proof that this "evidence of popular feeling" was not only falsified but falsified in the clumsiest way imaginable. It was not the President but the *New York Times* which was "imprudent" in going off the deep end after a school of fabricated Associated Gas and Electric telegrams. But has the *New York Times* printed a second editorial to say, "Excuse it please"? The *Times* has done nothing of the kind.

It may be that the election in Rhode Island is actually evidence of a reactionary tide rising in America. The result should not be minimized and it cannot quite be argued away. But I am loath to believe that the voters really want to go back to Hoover.

The tide against utter reaction is coming due for its flood. The newspapers of America have played the tory game with too much unanimity. To be sure they have not all gone to the lengths of Hearst, but many so-called liberal organs have been extremely cold to the more liberal portions of the Administration's program and many papers have abandoned all pretense of keeping their news columns and their editorial columns separate. The guardians of a "free press" calmly permit such headline phrases as "Soak-the-Thrifts Taxes" and act as if they were living up to the highest standards of newspaper ethics. It may be that an over-patient and long-suffering public will not rebel against newspaper leadership. But I believe it will. The most promising sign which I see for a new America is the growing skepticism of the newspaper reader.



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Books

Young Gloom

Winter Orchard and Other Stories. By Josephine Johnson. Simon and Schuster. \$2.50.

A WEAK, crepuscular melancholy pervades this volume of short stories by Josephine Johnson. Of the twenty-two stories only three strike a half-heartedly cheerful note. Five deal with unhappy love affairs, one with blindness, seven with death, and six with general frustration. This excessive preoccupation with would-be tragic situations, this sad determination to break through the bounds of personal experience, to seek in sensational events the very marrow of life and there to suck it out, is charming enough in a college student; one does not expect to find it in a Pulitzer Prize novelist. Undeniably, the twenty-five-year-old Miss Johnson has talent, a talent which is, at the moment, ingrowing, personal, static, purely descriptive. Her attempt to make herself into a philosopher or an ironist is valiant but premature. Her *Weltschmerz* is still the pleasant literary pain of late adolescence; her tragedies, seen from afar, foggily understood, overdramatized, become unreal little melodramas; and, in consequence, most of her pale repetitious stories have only hearsay value.

In general, Miss Johnson is at her best when she is dealing with simple sensory experience, when she lets her eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and fingers write for her, and forgets about her mind and emotions. A pie, a sunset, a jar of plum jelly, a frost, a young shoat, a million weeds and wild flowers, a field mouse, a quail, can impinge on her reader with more intense reality than the very best of her characters. Out of the changing of the seasons she can build a story like *Winter Orchard*, which needs no human drama to carry it. Mathilda, the history of a domineering old maid's eight lonely days in the woods, might have been a pleasant, quite plotless anecdote, had Miss Johnson not dug up the cheap old trick of the overheard, unkind conversation to give it an ironic-pathetic ending. The most successful story in the collection, *Arcadia Recalled*, gets all its nostalgic bite from its sharply observed, journal-like account of the daily phenomena of a child's vacation on a farm.

The rest of the stories in the volume, stories which concern themselves with people rather than with things, range, with one exception, from the barely competent to the ludicrous. Ludicrous to the point of burlesque is her single venture into the macabre, *Return*, a ghoulish tale intended, apparently, to be read with a French accent. Ludicrous in its frail toughness is her eyewitness's account of a condemned man's last hopeful moments, *Sure, That's All*. . . . Overwritten, humorless, touched with melodrama, perfumed with self-pity, *I Was Sixteen*, the study of a young girl's unrequited love, is yet honest and detailed enough to come close to being a good story. Safe is an acceptable, conventionally patterned narrative of the frustration of a young woman's love affair by her unconsciously jealous, consciously well-meaning spinster sister. In only one case does Miss Johnson's introverted sensibility really escape from itself; only once does a character show its own outlines, stand clear of the shadow of the author's young gloom. This is in *Dark*, where, in six fearful pages, Miss Johnson presents a blind man who has regained his sight only to lose it again in the fields at sundown.

Save for this piece, in her manipulation of human affairs Miss Johnson falls back on coincidence, on irony, misunderstanding, the intervention of outside forces—the writer's whole scrapbag of stunts—to give her stories the poignancy she feels in them but is unable to communicate by legitimate means. Out of the conjurer's bag, too, comes her cadenced prose. Too

obviously rhythmical, somniferous, it goes far to debilitate her occasionally vigorous phraseology. It is amazing that a writer primarily concerned with nature could produce such a languid, hothouse collection as "*Winter Orchard*."

MARY MCCARTHY

Life of a Zero

James Lane Allen and the Genteel Tradition. By Grant C. Knight. The University of North Carolina Press. \$2.50.

JAMES LANE ALLEN is little more than a name today, but time was, and not so long ago, when he was compared with Hawthorne, and his publishers, an old and conservative New York house, called him "the aristocrat of American letters, . . . perhaps the greatest of living novelists in America." That was in 1900. His popularity and reputation diminished rapidly thereafter, but even when he died in 1925 he was paid a glowing tribute in the *New York Times* by no less a person than Dr. John H. Finley, the late Adolph Ochs's official gladder and tear-squeezer. Allen is still mentioned in the more refined backwoods of Boston, Louisville, Kentucky, and Pelham Manor, New York, especially among people who recall weeping over "*The Choir Invisible*," which was a best-seller for years after its publication in 1897. But the reading public as a whole, as well as the critics, has forgotten him, and rightly so.

A lonely and melancholy man, he wrote two dozen novels and several score of short stories, nearly all of which might just as well have been written in the Revolutionary Era for all the relation they had to their times. The Spanish-American War, the thieveries of the robber barons, Theodore Roosevelt's imperialism, the World War—these made no impression on him. His sole interest was "the inner world where beckon undying memories." He found "the unreal outer world of every day" mainly unattractive. He wrote a great deal about women, but always with a vast lack of understanding. There is no real evidence that he was ever in love or that he had one solitary affair. When he was sixty years old he wrote a "daring" novel, "*The Bride of the Mistletoe*," in which he referred with complete irrelevance to the middle-aged wife's "warm, foam-white thigh." In his middle thirties he wrote for the *Critic* a denunciation of Henry James, in the course of which he presented the following as his credo of good literature:

Life as a whole is neither agnostic nor pessimistic; shall the novel that represents it be both agnostic and pessimistic? Life as a whole is spiritual and religious; shall the novel of life be devoid of spirituality and religiousness? Life as a whole presents a scene of happiness and success; shall the novel of life present a spectacle of wretchedness and failure?

Allen changed his credo during the succeeding forty years of his life, but only in minor detail. He remained the apostle of the Genteel Tradition to his dying day, and he was rewarded for this magnificent display of "character" by being relegated to oblivion.

A final word about his style. Its ornateness and sentimentality were so fulsome that even his staunchest admirer, Hamilton Wright Mabie, felt called upon to defend them. I quote a few typical lines culled from several of his works:

The utter silence and heart-oppressing repose of primeval nature was around us. The stark white and gray trunks of the immemorial forest dead linked us to an inviolable past.

[A description of a blind man:] a stranger smitten with eyes of perpetual night.

[A mother's soliloquy at the bedside of her sleeping child:] My heavenly guest! My guest from the singing stars of God!

Dr. Knight's discussion of Allen has value as a pioneer study, but otherwise it leaves much to be desired. It is deficient as writing and as criticism. His prose is reminiscent of Allen's. A few examples:

[As a child Allen was] a docile little fellow contented with his few toys and learning to turn more and more to the mother, who set in front of him a blue mug full of fresh milk—that mug which was in those days the rightful inheritance of every free-born American child. . . . From her he learned to read and thus to add a world of experience to the narrow area of his goings and comings. He learned from her also things not found in books: it was her finger that beckoned him to the windows early on a winter morning to see a design etched by Jack Frost; it was she who called his attention to the rose just opened; it was she who asked him to admire the first snowfall and to watch and listen to the redbird sitting in one of the cedars that marched at right angles to the wide porch.

Dr. Knight admits that Allen is far from first-rate and that he largely deserves the oblivion that has overtaken him, but he insists on being "fair" with his subject, which is to say timid and stupid. Allen, he says, was sentimental, but the reading public of his time demanded sentimental stories and anyway, "If he wrote sentimentally it was because he was sentimental—what healthy, normal person is not?—and not because he pretended to be." As to the charge that Allen wrote exclusively about drawing-room people, Dr. Knight remarks: "Literature is a boundless realm. . . . The genteel writers were . . . within their prerogatives when they moved in a polite and distinguished society. There are drawing-rooms and garden houses in the world as well as mill towns, speakeasies, and tumble-down cabins. . . . One function of literature is undoubtedly to present men and women as they are, but another one is to present them as in their more aspiring moments they would like to be."

Dr. Knight is associate professor of English at the University of Kentucky. I am sorry for his students.

CHARLES ANGOFF

A Gentleman and His Personality

Don Fernando, or Variations on Some Spanish Themes. By W. Somerset Maugham. Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.50.

SOMERSET MAUGHAM likes to feel that the secret of accomplishment is "personality." He likes to think of himself as the owner of an urbane, distinctive personality, and he likes to believe that what made Spain of the "Golden Age" golden was a crop of highly developed personalities. His meditations and reflections on the arts and Spaniards of that heroic century, and his thoughts about himself, art, literature, and the drama are strung so consistently on that theme that to be accurate he should have called his book "Personality: My Own and Some Unlike Mine."

It is a romantic story of how its author set out to write a novel about Spain of the Golden Age, around a kind of Sabatini hero: bold, lusty, handsome, reckless, and at the same time refined, witty, cultured, with a spiritual side. But the portrait of an English monk seen in Cadiz—a cold, ascetic, aloof, and somewhat snobbish character also imagined by Maugham—obtrudes with such insistence on Hero Number One that the novel simply cannot get written. Both these characters trans-

mit, synthetically, what Maugham looks backward to find in Spain's Golden Age. They are also a clue to the conventional charm and triteness that characterize most of his life-art-Spain interpretations.

Carrying no great burden of thought, the book ripples along pleasantly to conform with Maugham's definition of good writing "like the conversation of a well-bred man." It is full of entertainment, completely free of anything jarring or exciting; very, very cultured and lucid and superficial. Subtly, below the mellow obviousness of his meditations, Maugham carries on a kind of implicit argument with himself, a gentlemanly debate as to the relative merits of the life of art versus the life of action. Golden Age Spain—and Hero Number One—seems to symbolize the life of action; Maugham himself and the monk who blots out the cavalier signify the life of thought. Variations on this theme bring the author to the conclusion that the Spaniards never amounted to much as writers because they were "amateurs"—being chiefly engaged in non-intellectual activities; whereas fine writing springs from professional soil (with exceptions) and is the result of cultivation and personality.

But there is no room for argument in Maugham's philosophic approach to life, art, Spain, and action, since each has its merits because of a common denominator: personality. And with that illuminating contribution one can go a long way toward asserting that greatness is greatness because it is greatness.

ANITA BRENNER

Hermaphrodite

We Too Are Drifting. By Gale Wilhelm. Random House. \$2.

THIS novelette is concerned solely with passionate experience. Miss Wilhelm sings a composed, dark-browed woman of thirty with a boy's slim body and small firm breasts whom we find coldly disentangling herself from Madeline, of whom she has tired, and ardently devising plans for meeting again a fresh young girl of twenty whose pretty face and figure, approaching her through a crowded restaurant, immediately captivate her heart.

One might point out the narcissistic worship with which the author regards her heroine. Jan Morale, famous for her wood-cuts, is as definitely romanticized as were Rowena, Rebecca, or Amelia Sedley. Jan smokes, drinks, whores, and curses; but she is a romantic figure, besought and admired by all. Kletkin, the great sculptor, only consents to marry another when he realizes there is no hope for him with Jan, reassures her continually that she is a "wonderful feller," and uses her as a model for his finest work, the bronze figure of a hermaphrodite. Beautiful, wealthy, married Madeline clings to her beseechingly. Beautiful, unmarried Victoria would leave family, home, and fiancé for her at a nod. Jan doesn't nod. She is always right, always noble, always melancholy, and a great artist.

One might point out also that the passionate dilemmas, the curses, the drinks, and noble melancholy of this stripling lover provide an amusing commentary, almost a *reductio ad absurdum*, of the Hemingway method of depicting passion. Further, these youngsters, struggling to be great and different, regard themselves as very wonderful fellers indeed, with their attic studios, their bohemian regalia, and their defiant independence. But in every great city today one may see just such dark-browed, passionate faces as Jan Morale's. They suggest the turbulent faces of the middle Renaissance. They belong to the breakers of molds, the destroyers, who sometimes also create and are sometimes sterile and sinister.

This is a first book. There is little really felicitous writing in it. Yet in spite of its defects it seems to be much more worthy of attention than, let us say, Miss Cather's smooth, accomplished tale of various fictitious and not too consistent characters through whose lives she points a moral and adorns a tale called "Lucy Gayheart." Miss Cather writes competently turned sentences, and Miss Wilhelm writes a sloppy, would-be modernistic melange in which, quite unconsciously I suspect, she imitates Hemingway on one page and Virginia Woolf on another, and seeks originality by the tried and true device of avoiding quotation marks and being very bold and stripped and most confusingly simple. Miss Cather constructs her tale competently and Miss Wilhelm hurls hers at the reader. Jan refuses to illustrate a successful writer's book because, she explains, "I read one of his books once. It was a big, fat circus horse galloping round and round a ring and never getting anywhere and all those trappings and everything." The book in which she stars is as stripped and lean as herself. It is written without sensationalism and without shame. It hews straight to its purpose and flings its passion at us. Out of such passion and sincerity literature may one day come.

ALICE BEAL PARSONS

Professor Read's Thesis

Art and Industry. By Herbert Read. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.75.

THIS lavishly illustrated book by England's warmest defender of the contemporary avant-gardists, made its appearance simultaneously with the exhibition of machine arts at London's Royal Academy. It seems to have been designed to serve as a comprehensive primer for befuddled laymen and doubting Thomases who are inclined to question the potential aesthetic validity of machine production. But I doubt whether the author's arguments will help either to enlighten the perplexed or convert the diehards. Nor can they be of very much use to the specialist, who has already been introduced to most of the issues which Professor Read raises, by the original exponents of functionalism in Austria, Germany, Holland, and elsewhere. When Read's indebtedness to such functionalist pioneers as Walter Gropius and Moholy-Nagy is subtracted from his total contribution, what remains is a keen and rather unusual talent for formal analysis. In the structural footnotes to the included illustrations are to be found, consequently, the book's most significant value.

There is certainly no ignominy attached to interpreting or expanding borrowed doctrines. Unfortunately, Professor Read seems not to have thoroughly understood the functionalist point of view or he never would have made the central problem of his book one which is of comparatively small importance—namely, the extent to which "the objects of machine production can produce the essential qualities of art." Instead of going directly to the root cause of popular misunderstanding by dispelling the bogey that a person who paints is necessarily more of an artist than one who, let us say, designs machine-loomed textiles, and explaining why art can be produced by any means provided an artist (a rare bird in any age) is the producer, Professor Read attacks his problem in the manner of a nineteenth-century German aesthete and devotes a considerable portion of his book to spinning an ingenious but faulty web of dialectical proof.

Stripped to its barest essentials it runs something like this: There are two distinctive types of art—the *humanistic arts*, which are individualistic, intuitive, and "concerned with the expression in plastic form of human ideals or emotions," and the *abstract arts*, which are rational, objective, non-figurative,

and have "no concern beyond making objects whose plastic form appeals to the aesthetic sensibility." The utilitarian or industrial arts belong exclusively, according to Professor Read's line of reasoning, in the second category, and he contends that the machine, "which works to adjustment and measure, can produce such works with unfailing and unrivaled precision."

An attractive simplification, certainly, and neatly argued, but glaringly fallacious. Professor Read's classifications have little basis in fact and completely pervert the true nature of the arts, which are neither wholly "humanistic" nor wholly "abstract," but a variable union of both. Creative intuition is based on the same organic and formal laws as creative rationalism, and where you find a divorce between them you usually find, not art, but chaos or artifice. Our author's use of the term "aesthetic sensibility"—that is to say, the sensory appeal of a work having no organic or human reference—indicates a blindness on his part both to the real character of artistic creativeness and of creative appreciation. If the utilitarian arts are "abstract," it is because they embody a limited range of aesthetic relationships. The machine, it is true, is now best fitted to produce this type of art, but that does not mean it will always be so, or that the art of our age "is essentially an abstract art, quite distinct from the humanistic art of the Renaissance." Abstraction, in the sense that Professor Read uses the expression, is, I contend, a transitional stage rather than a permanent camping-ground.

What Professor Read has done is to make a thesis of a wish-fulfilment. It seems idle to conjecture whether the machine can produce art, or what type of art it will be, when what is needed is the kind of society in which the creative energies of man can find their richest expression and widest communal outlet. What is needed is sound craftsmen and the requisite technological and social training that will make them so. If the industrial forms which they create are fully dictated by their function, that is as much as we can hope for. If art is the result, so much the better.

E. M. BENSON

Prince Mirsky's Observations

The Intelligentsia of Great Britain. By Dmitri Mirsky. Translated by Alec Brown. Covici, Friede. \$2.50.

THE literary criticism of Prince Mirsky displayed wide learning, remarkable industry, and a lack of any philosophical or aesthetic insight; this book, written by Comrade Mirsky, has the same virtues and the same deficiencies. It is a study of intellectual currents in Great Britain during the epoch of imperialism, beginning in the eighteen-nineties and extending down to the present, and is written from the viewpoint of the most dogmatic Stalinism. Different chapters deal with the Fabians, the Bloomsbury group, recent developments in science, philosophy, and religion, and finally with the intellectuals who have recently turned to socialism or communism.

The volume was apparently written before the change in the policy of the Comintern, since any socialist who does not support the Communist Party is described as a "social fascist." Mirsky displays great contempt for nearly everybody whom he mentions, and his invective is often amusing. He avoids the usual mistake of identifying aesthetic value with political direction, admitting occasionally that a bourgeois writer may have aesthetic merit; on the other hand he seems to have little interest in aesthetics, restricting himself mainly to the study of ideas. He makes great play with the word "dialectical," all the philosophers whom he mentions being denounced for their lack of dialectics. Mirsky himself, however, never

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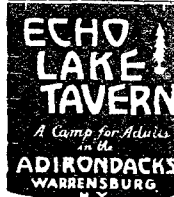
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uses dialectical interpretations, his theory of causation being mechanistic. One's class position is responsible for one's ideology, and the factor of interaction, which according to Marx and Engels was the essence of dialectics, is ignored. Thus, for example, the novels of Virginia Woolf are explained by the fact that she lives on dividends from investments, and her statement that good artistic creation requires "a room of one's own" is an example of leisure-class ideology. This book will presumably please those already converted; but since it never suggests any reason why communism should be considered desirable, it is unlikely to make new converts; in fact, it will more probably alienate any who still have prejudices against intellectual fanaticism.

H. B. PARKES

Shorter Notices

Feliciano. By Stark Young. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

If this volume of very slight sketches has anything at all to prove, it is that Stark Young is a Southern gentleman of the old school. He treats his Negro servants with that cheery condescension which is generally accorded to faithful household pets; he is full of ancestor worship and an almost clannish loyalty to the existing members of his family; he has a nostalgic love for the plantations known to his boyhood, and a quite definite contempt for anything that is Yankee and *nouveau* and untouched by the traditions of the Deep South. Apparently, however, Mr. Young wishes to prove something more universal than his individual debt to these traditions: "Life," he says somewhere, "if it is to last, must have a social scheme." By "a social scheme" Mr. Young undoubtedly means one capable of maintaining the manners and customs—even the atmosphere—of that part of the world which he so deeply admires. But the emptiness of his observations on life and human society in general, the reverence which even the most frivolous and questionable local institutions seem to inspire in him, and the labored quality of his style go a long way toward exposing the vitiating effects of this retrogressive and sectarian ideal.

Paul Elmer More and American Criticism. By Robert Shafer. Yale University Press. \$4.

No better service could be rendered to the cause of liberal and radical thought than that an antagonistic philosophy should arise to force it to reexamine its premises and stiffen its defenses. Humanism was taken to be such an antagonist, but after its public flurry of a few years ago it has become again a private and (to use the phrase Dr. Shafer so much admires) "teeny-weeny" affair, sterile and ill-tempered, making extravagant and irresponsible statements in a void. Dr. Shafer's exposition of Mr. More's thought contains all that

one needs to know to understand why (short of ascendancy on a wave of political reaction) humanism can be important only to the cloister. Dr. Shafer's concluding words on the man whom he calls the most remarkable in American letters will, in their significant meaninglessness, serve to give the emotional tone of the philosophy: Mr. More, he says, is a man "whose concern is with the highest subjects and whose style is that of a Christian gentleman." For the rest, the point of view is a mere juggling with unexamined symbols to the end that Mr. More's soul shall have comfort from the fear of death and eternity. Mr. More's one jolt was received when scientific materialism jarred his Midwest Christian pietism. He took up a sickly Platonism of the literary, quasi-sexual, O Beauty kind. He passed to Manicheanism, solving the problem of evil by declaring its necessity. Buddhism and Hellenism were next levied on, and now—apparently a little puzzled (he alone!)—the scourge of God upon liberalism and radicalism stands just outside the door of Christianity. Dr. Shafer is a little disturbed that Mr. More seems to be indicating the wicket of Anglo-Catholicism; he is also disturbed that in the field of immediate practical morality Mr. More has tended "to remain seemingly content with the practical rules which were good enough in the last century for Howells and Longfellow and Lowell and Holmes."

Contributors to This Issue

A. B. MAGIL is a labor journalist, author of a pamphlet "The Truth About Father Coughlin."

LEWIS COREY is the author of "The Decline of American Capitalism" (1934). The articles now appearing in *The Nation* are chapters from his new book, "The Crisis of the Middle Class," which will be published in September by Covici, Friede.

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ALICE BEAL PARSONS is the author of "John Merrill's Pleasant Life."



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